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## THE MASSACRE AT JEDDAH.

THE tragedy which has been enacted on the shore of the Red Sea, over and above the horror which such an event must under any circumstances excite, is not unlikely, in the present state of European politics, to give rise to very serious diplomatic complications. One thing is sufficiently clear—viz., the necessity of speedy and most decisive measures on the part of the English Government, in order to re-establish the authority of the English name and the security of English subjects on the line of our great high road to the East. The interests of humanity, no less than of justice, demand that a signal and exemplary retribution should overtake the actors in this horrible outrage. It is but too apparent that the great earthquake which has convulsed the Mahometan population of Hindostan has extended its influence through the whole region where the faith of ISLAM reigns in the East. The crater which has just poured forth its fiery torrent of fanaticism at Jeddah is, with great probability, connected with the shock which has laid Delhi and Cawnpore in ashes. The rumour which spread with such fatal rapidity in Hindostan, of the approaching triumph of the Crescent over the Cross, has reached far beyond the limits of the Indian peninsula. In every place where the faith of MAHOMET is professed, the flame of religious hate seems to have been rekindled against the Christian, under the influence of some mysterious and fanatical expectation. It is said, with much appearance of truth, that the recent outrage in the Red Sea had its origin in the instigation of pilgrims who had themselves assisted at the massacres in Bengal. Even in Candia and in other places actually within the circle of European civilization, we hear of fresh outbreaks, with difficulty repressed, and almost daily repeated.

This is a state of things which demands some speedy and effectual cure. The great difficulty of the case is, that we have no sovereign Power to deal with from whom we can expect or exact a satisfactory remedy. The Turkish rule, which the rivalry of European nations has made it necessary to sustain, is barely able at the centre of its own authority to maintain the semblance of peace and of order. But in the more distant part of the dominions of the SULTAN, the authority of the State is not more felt or obeyed than is the rule of the CZAR by the wild hordes of Eastern Siberia. The local Kamaikan is powerless—even if he were willing, which is often more than doubtful—to repress the turbulence of a population which is at once lawless, ignorant, and fanatical. In Constantinople, the power of the Christian is as much feared as his faith is detested; but in Asia, the unprotected European is at the mercy of wild beasts which have not yet learned to dread the resources of civilized man. A great and terrible lesson will have to be read, which will restore to the Christians throughout the East that opinion which is more formidable than even the reality of strength. It will not do to leave to the tardy and suspicious justice of Turkish authorities the vengeance that must be exacted for this atrocious crime, which has been perpetrated with every circumstance of cruelty and insult against the English flag, and upon English subjects. The correspondent of the *Times* refers to several recent instances of similar outrages, whose culpable impunity has laid the foundation of fresh disasters. If Jeddah be not made a bye-word in the East, the lives and property of every Christian inhabitant and traveller throughout Asia will be in daily and hourly peril.

Obvious, however, as it is that some vigorous and decisive measures must be instantly adopted, the difficulties which may arise are neither few nor insignificant. Already the news from Paris informs us that the French Government are eagerly pressing on to take possession of the quarrel. The fact that the French Consul was one of the sufferers in the outbreak forms the pretext of an interference for which

the French have long been seeking a decent excuse. It is not improbable that LOUIS NAPOLEON may be only too willing to seize the occasion for laying the foundation of a French influence in Egypt, which has been so hardly contested in the case of M. LESSEPS. Whatever may be the rights of the much-disputed question of the Canal, it is not difficult to see how little desirable it is for England that a French fleet should, upon any pretence, obtain a permanent station in the Red Sea. Yet this is an event to the imminent probability of which we would call Lord MALMESBURY'S most anxious attention. The project of an Eastern dominion is eminently an *idée Napoléonienne*, and it is a scheme which is equally calculated to gratify the vanity of the French people and the ambition of the EMPEROR. No doubt the English Cabinet will receive, as in the case of the Indian rebellion, the most disinterested offers of co-operation and assistance. We hope that they will be received, as before, with the most courteous coldness. If the truth must be told, the doctrine of the French Alliance has been carried to its extreme limits. If it was absolutely necessary to have a quarrel with the High Commissioner at Canton, we still think that a great Power like England was quite competent to see justice done to itself. It was hardly requisite to call in our faithful ally for the purpose of bombarding a Chinese fort, or capturing a one-tailed Mandarin.

We can afford to be amused at the braggadocio with which the French arrogate to themselves the glory of the paltry affair just alluded to. But it is no laughing matter that a title should be advanced and admitted, on the part of a foreign Power, to participate in all the commercial enterprises which have hitherto been the strength and the exclusive possession of England. The truth is, that this "cordial co-operation" is going a good deal too far to be either pleasant or politic. We very much doubt the policy of putting even the European interests of England into a sort of Continental hotch-pot; but when it comes to instituting a species of unlimited partnership with the French in all our affairs, the matter assumes a very serious aspect. We are willing to admit that the French alliance was not only a permissible, but a desirable expedient for the particular occasion of the Russian war. A good understanding with a powerful neighbour must at all times be the object of a prudent statesman. But we confess we see with alarm the tendency to conduct our foreign policy on the notion that the French Government has a sort of joint-stock interest in our political capital. We believe that the leading principle of entire independence in our international relations, which has been the prescriptive doctrine of English statesmen, was far wiser than the new policy of co-operation, which too often ends in subservency, inaugurated during the last few years by Lord PALMERSTON. The doctrine of international arbitration to which Lord CLARENDON was instructed to accede on behalf of England at Paris, seems to us one of the most dangerous and mischievous blows ever aimed at the supremacy of this country. Nothing but its insular policy and its naval superiority has enabled a people numerically small to hold the first place among the nations of Europe. It is the power of independent and immediate operation with our fleet which has given this country a weight to which its military strength could never have entitled it. When we once consent to be dragged out of the safe refuge of our own insular policy, and plead to a Continental jurisdiction, the might of England is departed from her. Our diplomatists slumbered while the Dalila of Paris cut the locks off the head of the nation which they represented. But it is not too late to retrace our steps, and to regain the independence of action which we have gone far to forfeit. Lord MALMESBURY has shown that he is not incapable of acting with spirit and sagacity. The conduct of the proceedings which must arise

out of this Red Sea affair will try his capacity to the utmost. The more he is able to vindicate English interests exclusively by English authority, the better, we believe, he will consult the permanent welfare of the country. It is impossible to tell how much the future destiny of our Indian Empire may turn on the question whether or not the French Government shall be permitted to effect for itself an establishment on the shores of the Red Sea.

#### THE INDIA BILL IN THE LORDS.

THE Conservative Government of Lord DERBY has reduced the House of Lords to a condition of such impotence that it would be foolish to regard the India Bill as having passed under the jurisdiction of an independent assembly. It is true that, if the Upper House had not conclusively pledged itself to follow the dictates of the Lower, it might be considered as having considerable advantages in its discussion of the affairs of India. No hasty vote committed it at the beginning of the session to a policy which it did not understand and had no means of carrying out. It might, if it had thought fit to look on itself as really charged with a great authority, have fairly debated and decided whether a change in the home administration of India was necessary, whether it was opportune, and whether any measure submitted to Parliament proposed to create a form of Government which, substituted for present arrangements, had appreciable chances of practical success. But habits of acquiescence have now so firm a hold upon the House of Lords, that all these points must be regarded as finally adjudicated upon. The utmost which can be expected from the Upper House is a minor improvement here and there in provisions of minor importance. Debates under such circumstances possess little interest. The East India Company will have the honour of being eulogized by some, and of being vituperated by others, and the whole discussion will probably consist of variations on the themes of these opposing parties.

If the House of Lords cared to signalize itself by the wisdom of its amendments on the proposed measure, it would direct its attention to the clauses which give the SECRETARY OF STATE the powers of the present Secret Committee. There is little presumption in asserting that the framers of this most dangerous provision are in ignorance of its purport and probable effect. At present, the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors is bound to obey the orders of the President of the Board of Control. But, though it must obey, there is no reason to believe that it obeys quite passively. It consists of the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Company, who unite all threads of knowledge on the subject of India; and these officials are not likely to allow a talking politician to jeopardize the Empire without at least putting forth the whole strength of remonstrance. An ELLENBOROUGH may use their name to insult a CANNING; or a HOBHOUSE, at the bidding of a PALMERSTON, may render them helpless accomplices in an Afghan war; but there are doubtless Ministers more facile, or less feeble, who would hesitate wholly to disregard the advice of two experienced Indian statesmen. But the SECRETARY OF STATE, under the new system, is to act by himself. He cannot consult his whole Council. He cannot without invidious distinction make a portion of it the depositary of his confidence; and, if he did, he would be deprived of that very material security which the existing system affords—the oath of secrecy. Accordingly, this clause of the new Bill has not only the effect of relieving the SECRETARY OF STATE from control in the exercise of powers which experience proves to have been repeatedly employed with the most disastrous recklessness, but it absolutely throws difficulties in the way of his obtaining advice when he is modest enough to feel the want of it. It would surely be infinitely better that the undoubted inconvenience of confiding a State secret to fifteen gentlemen should be incurred, than that an exaggerated desire to obtain absolute secrecy should throw the reins on the neck of precipitation or incompetence. After all, is the danger that the Councillors of India should betray confidence so very imminent? Or, if they did, are we quite sure that the country would be much the worse for it? The Secret Committee can only be properly used for communications respecting peace, war, and diplomacy with native Princes. The days of diplomatic surprises are nearly over, even in Europe; and as for peace and war, there is no question respecting the possible outbreak of hostilities between

our own country and a European Power which is not thoroughly ventilated by the press and in Parliament whole months before a critical stage is reached. It is only with reference to India that there exists this suspicious anxiety to forestall public opinion. It is only the secrets of Indian government which suffer, it appears, from being confided to fifteen experienced officials, whom half-a-dozen words would place on an honourable understanding as to secrecy. Here in England, a great determination as to war or peace must be communicated to Printing House-square at least a week before it is carried into effect, or woe to the Minister who conceals it. But, in India, Lord PALMERSTON insists that we must jealously guard the official practices which carefully hid from Leadenhall-street the fact that an army had marched to perish in Afghanistan, and which acquainted us that an expedition had landed at Persia by the same mail which brought the news that an unusual number of troops were assembling at Bombay.

Any well-conceived amendment of the provision as to the Secret Committee would have the advantage of enabling the House of Lords to dispense with the two clauses introduced by Mr. GLADSTONE. Any security against the follies of meddling Indian Ministers and Sultanized Governors-General is to be embraced, so long as Secretaries of State are armed with the powers of the Secret Committee; but Mr. GLADSTONE'S clauses have the inconvenience of militating against a constitutional superstition, while the absence of any precedent as to the proper mode of obtaining the consent of Parliament to a declaration of war would probably tempt Governments to slip through the loophole which is furnished them by the permission to engage in hostilities on "any urgent necessity." If the House of Lords relieved the authors of the Bill from the dilemma in which they are placed, between their unwillingness to create a form of control for every action of the Indian Minister, and their wish to neutralize the natural consequences of his unfettered independence, it would have rendered an essential service to Lord DERBY'S Government. All that any Ministry can hope, in legislating for India, is to do as little harm as possible. The present Bill, thanks to the repentance of the House of Commons, is free from those staring blots which were forced on the attention of the country by the insolence and sciolism of Lord ELLENBOROUGH, by the recklessness and ignorance of Lord PALMERSTON, and by the ignorance and recklessness of Mr. VERNON SMITH. A few more improvements would render it a measure which has a tolerable chance of not irremediably disgracing the age and nation which produced it.

#### THE JEW BILL.

AFTER ten or eleven weary years, the great Jewish controversy is about to pass, perhaps for ever, into a state of suspended animation. The ingenious substitute for a capitulation, which was devised by Lord LUCAN, has carefully tied up, for the benefit of posterity, the inherited right of persecution or exclusion; and when a House of Commons for any reason cultivates intolerance, or a Jewish Lord CHANCELLOR receives a peerage from the Crown, the CHELMSFORDS and NEWDEGATES of future years may make a successful effort to re-Christianize an apostate Legislature. The principal losers by the interval of tolerance will probably be the Jews themselves, who may perhaps nearly have seen the last of Parliament. As long as every constituency can command a hundred candidates of their own blood and religious profession, there is no apparent reason for their making a choice in a community of alien extraction, endowed with several unpopular qualities. The City voters repeatedly returned Baron ROTHSCHILD, partly out of reverence for his wealth, but principally because the law had imposed an artificial restriction on their choice. When the first Jewish member of the House retires into private life, there is every reason to expect that his successor will be selected from the undistinguished multitude of professing Christians. No logical deduction from a constitutional principle was ever drawn into practice with less risk of any unforeseen or inconvenient result. The English character contains among its elements a fair proportion of bigotry, but the nation, in modern times at least, revolts against attempts to make it intolerant by legal compulsion. The prohibition which is now about to be withdrawn would have excited less agitation if it had been contained in some plain enactment, or in the ancient rules of the Common-law; but it was not to be endured that civil equality



should be disturbed through the mixed result of a quibble and a blunder. Of late years, orators have never attempted to copy Lord MACAULAY's glowing eulogy on the genius which belongs to the countrymen of Isaiah and the valour proper to the descendants of the Maccabees; or, if Mr. DISRAELI on one occasion boasted of the antique tenacity of his race, he also intimated his genuine indifference to the success of their constitutional pretensions. The increasing majorities of the House of Commons have been brought together by an indignant sense of absurdity, as much as by the necessity of finding a harmless vent for the liberalism which had been professed in general terms at the hustings. It was impossible to maintain for ever an enactment against the Jacobites which incidentally inflicted a disqualification on the Jews.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL has made up his mind to accept the compromise offered by the Lords, and he has accordingly taken charge of the Bill, but he intimates an amusing disappointment at the loss of an opportunity for creating inextricable confusion in the country. Notwithstanding the all but unanimous opinion of the lawyers in the House of Commons, Lord JOHN still holds to the belief that the Jews might have been admitted by resolution, even if the enabling Bill had not been introduced. In that case, the Courts of Law would have imposed statutable penalties without regard to an illegal encroachment, and the House of Commons would have retaliated by committing sheriffs and officers, even if the Lord Chief Justice had been exempt from a not unwelcome martyrdom. Such, says Lord JOHN RUSSELL, would have been the duty of the House, and he evidently regards with complacency the theory of two irreconcilable jurisdictions engaged in an interminable conflict. Fortunately, however, he remembers that times have changed since the Restoration and the Revolution, and that the country is no longer inclined to provide a security against oppression by confiding irresponsible power to a body which is already sufficiently strong. It is strange that an ex-Minister and professed constitutional authority should lay down the heretical doctrine that the House of Commons is the supreme power in the State. Political essayists are at liberty to pull the machine of Government to pieces for the purpose of examining the real working of its various parts, but responsible statesmen, in their public declarations, are bound to respect the legal doctrines of the constitution. The influence of the House of Commons scarcely admits of any limit, but it cannot procure a copy of the simplest public document without the formality of an address to the Crown; there is not a corporal in the army who would relieve guard five minutes too early at the unanimous bidding of the House; nor, with all its practical supremacy, can it, without statutable license, administer an oath to a witness at the bar. One of the principal securities of freedom consists in the separation which gradually grows up between the legal attributes of constituted authorities and their practical weight in public affairs. Lord JOHN RUSSELL's explanation that the right of withholding supplies is equivalent to sovereign control is a feeble excuse for an awkward blunder. The House of Lords is perfectly aware that it must evade serious conflict by timely concession, but it is useless to challenge resistance, or to boast of a superiority unknown to the constitution.

One of the oddest incidents in the recent proceedings consists in the string of reasons which were drawn up by the House of Lords to defend their conduct in rejecting the clauses of the Oaths Bill. It would have been at least decorous to leave the religious argument out of the dispute, when all parties had agreed that it was to be practically overruled. The majority of the Lords has just authorized the Commons to perpetrate the hollow mockery which, in their reasons, is zealously denounced; and yet it can scarcely be denied that the beadle who lends a known thief the key of the church is constructively guilty of the sacrilege which follows. Conscientious scruples are not unfrequently disregarded in political transactions, but when it is intended that they should not serve as motives or excuses for action, it is prudent to suppress considerations which make a compromise impossible. Lord DERBY himself was so far sensible of the absurdity that he disclaimed any participation in the doctrine that the presence of one or two unchristened representatives of a Christian people would deprive the ceremonial prayers of all their fitness and efficacy. The announcement that another Bill for the same purpose had already been passed would have supplied the best possible reason for declining to discuss the arguments of the Commons.

Tender consciences, shocked by the measure which will

have unchristianized the House of Commons, may find some compensation in a curtailment of the verbal profanity which has hitherto been enforced by law. The oaths will be rendered less absurd by the omission of some obsolete clauses, and the Pretender's ghost will cease to walk, through the decision of the same Parliament which has exorcised his fellow shadows of the Gunpowder Plot, the blessed Restoration, and the glorious Revolution. Future generations will probably discover that there is no use in lowering the stile when the hedge in which it was inserted has been finally taken up. The various oaths were never meant for those who were willing to take them, but as a safeguard against conscientious recusants. As no class remains without the pale of the Constitution, it seems superfluous to maintain the ancient fence; but the whole matter possesses only a secondary importance, as few will be troubled by the restrictions of an oath when the *animus imponentis* is a sheet of blank paper. Members of Parliament promise nothing which they could refuse to perform if all promissory declarations were abolished, and there is no great harm in swearing to a purpose of going to bed at night and getting up in the morning. For some years to come it may be hoped that nothing more will be heard of oaths, or Jews, or of legislative interference with the political rights of all English subjects.

#### CHERBOURG.

THE five-and-thirty years which elapsed before 1851 were distinguished from any preceding period of general peace by the cordial and unsuspicious intercourse which, on the whole, prevailed among nations. For this honourable characteristic the period in question is indebted to the number of free Constitutions which existed in Europe. Every Government knew exactly when there was reason for alarm, and when there was excuse for security, simply because the affairs of the greatest commonwealths in Europe were always freely discussed in the face of day by their journals and Parliaments. The system of peaceful diplomacy which prevailed differed wholly from that which dishonoured the century preceding. When all the nations of the Continent except one or two insignificant Republics were controlled by hereditary despotisms, it was thoroughly understood that the profoundest sleep of peace might have a waking in war. FREDERIC the GREAT systematically plotted his attacks for the moment when his destined victims were lapped in security, and his enemies learned from him the grievous example. But the great pacification of 1815 endowed Europe with some great free States, whose mode of managing their policy put an end to such calamitous surprises. Kings had to feel the pulse of their subjects before they compromised them in the heaviest of all national misfortunes. During this process the whole brewing of the storm, from the cloud like a man's hand to the heaven black with clouds and wind, was open and visible to the civilized world. States had time to wrap themselves round with defences; the strength of each rival was clearly ascertained before the crisis; and the result always was that repentance came in time, and the sky of Europe again grew bright.

The re-establishment of despotism in France has thrown us back on the fears, jealousies, and suspicions of the eighteenth century. Once again we do not know what a cordial alliance means. The world has not the slightest idea what symptoms are menacing, and what are reassuring. The French journals are worthless for international purposes. The most delicate and considerate compliments, and the most acrimonious philippics, are alike valueless to the observer. One week of a free Parliament, one day of a free press, one hour's genuine audit of the Imperial budget, would set at rest almost every doubt which Englishmen feel; but short of this, they know that all inquiry into the designs of our neighbour must be the merest guesswork, and that worst of all guesswork which strives to penetrate the springs of action in a single human being. If we were merely engaged in a study of character, we might be at liberty to see much in the Emperor of the FRENCH that is reassuring. He does certainly seem to have carried with him from England some respect and regard for English idiosyncrasies. He appeared to enjoy the popularity which attended his visit to the QUEEN. And one may reasonably believe that his freedom from some of the ordinary weaknesses of his subjects opens his eyes to the fact that the long-enduring, long-remembering animosity of Great Britain is one of the most terrible dangers which a nation or a dynasty can call up. But then, it must be again and again repeated, he is the author of

the *coup d'état*. They too who suffered by that catastrophe imagined that they understood his character. M. LEON FAUCHER, one of the honestest men in France, pledged his word that LOUIS NAPOLEON was sincere. M. THIERS, one of the shrewdest men in Europe, all but publicly declared that he was a fool. But he lived to undeceive them both. M. FAUCHER died of chagrin at having been made an unwitting accomplice in a conspiracy against freedom; and M. THIERS has recently written of the man whom he despised with a respect which promises to slide gradually into adulation.

The paucity of data for estimating the proximity or remoteness of war is the real cause of the uneasiness which has been caused in England by the armament of Cherbourg. We all feel that no assumptions as to the EMPEROR's habits of mind can be allowed to stand against the great fact of this gigantic arsenal. The *Moniteur de la Flotte* is not required to tell us that Cherbourg is "the result of the long-continued rivalry between the two nations." We all know that. We know that it was conceived to threaten England, founded to threaten her, and carried to completion as a standing menace against her. Everybody who can find Portsmouth and Plymouth on the map can find Cherbourg also, and can tell what it is meant for. For all time to come there will be a great naval port fronting our coasts, with marvellous docks, fortifications like those of Sebastopol, and a railway which, at a day's notice, can crowd it with soldiers and sailors. We look at this, and we have nothing to neutralize the impression it produces, except the paradox of a French official writer, to the effect that the completion of Cherbourg naturally accompanies the extinction of the ancient rivalry which created it. Turn it how we may, the armament of Cherbourg is an unfriendly act. It is unfriendly, because it drives a Power, careful of its safety, and not too spiritless to wish for something more than safety, to multiply, strengthen, and renew its defences. It is unfriendly, because it necessarily puts us to the cost of a Channel fleet. It is unfriendly, because the EMPEROR, whatever be his own designs, can give no guarantee against the uses to which a successor may put a colossal instrument of attack. The invitation to our own Sovereign to attend the inauguration of these great works may be some reason for thinking that no immediate aggression is intended; but, in truth, it was the conspicuous unfriendliness of the step which had been taken that rendered such an invitation necessary to mask and dissemble it. In short, whatever may be the EMPEROR's real objects and intentions, he has clearly left us no alternative but to provide for all contingencies; and we trust that our rulers will see the prudence and necessity of immediately placing such a fleet in the Channel as may be adequate, under any conceivable circumstances, to the effectual protection of our coasts.

#### ENGLAND AND THE SLAVE TRADE.

HAVING announced, with its usual positiveness and its not unusual inaccuracy, that Ministers had resolved to abandon all the measures which they have hitherto pursued for the suppression of the Slave-trade, the *Times* is naturally not a little angry to find that its reasoning has been wholly without influence, and that its authoritative intelligence was entirely devoid of foundation. The Government are not about to terminate, nor even to suspend, the operations of the blockading squadrons either on the Coast of Africa or on that of Cuba. And the House of Commons, by a majority of 223 to 24, rejected the motion of Mr. HURT, "That it is expedient to discontinue the practice of authorizing Her Majesty's ships to visit and search vessels under foreign flags, with a view of suppressing the traffic in slaves." This division, we apprehend, very fairly represents the balance of public opinion on the question. Of course the *Times* is at liberty to denounce the cause in which WILBERFORCE laboured as "a national hypocrisy" which is "thoroughly worthless, dangerous, and corrupt;" but it is a little too much to assert that a principle which Parliament has affirmed by a majority of ten to one, is "something that honest men regard with contempt, and prudent men with horror." It is not by vapid phrases of this description that a great question can be disposed of, when all politicians of any eminence or character in the country are agreed in adhering to the policy which the *Times* thinks fit to condemn. It might be well for the leading journal to reserve this tone of confident dogmatism for occasions on which it has more chance of escape from instantaneous and humiliating defeat.

In the debate on Mr. HURT's resolution, the argument was even more conclusively on one side than the vote. The speeches of Mr. CARDWELL and Mr. FITZGERALD left not a rag of reason to cover the nakedness of those who advocate the cessation of the efforts to which England has pledged herself for the suppression of the abominable traffic. In answer to the assertion that the operations of the squadron had been wholly fruitless, it was shown that while, fifteen years ago, the annual export of slaves from Africa had been 135,000, the highest estimate at the present moment was 15,000. Lord PALMERSTON and Mr. CARDWELL justly relied on the great victory obtained in the total suppression of the Brazilian traffic. Mr. HURT and his friends, indeed, argued that the course adopted by the Brazilian Government had no connexion with the operations of our squadron, and that the abolition of the Slave-trade in that country was a spontaneous act of internal policy. But this view of the case was at once disposed of by the real history of the transaction, as detailed by those who had the best means of being acquainted with the truth. The same arguments which are now employed to deter us from persisting in our attacks on the Cuban trade were urged in 1850 against our operations in the Brazilian waters. We were then told that we had not only embarked in an enterprise which it was impossible effectually to execute, but that our very efforts would goad and stimulate the Brazilian Government to resistance. In spite, however, of these prognostications, the English Government persevered; and in less than a twelvemonth the Brazilian trade was extinguished, and with it terminated the annual miseries of more than 100,000 human beings. As if to preclude all possibility of mistake as to the principal and moving cause of this beneficial change, the Brazilian Minister for Foreign Affairs addressed the Chamber of that country in the following language:—"I will do all I can to maintain the honour and dignity of the nation, but you must not suppose that when a country like England is in earnest, you can long maintain a traffic which she is anxious to extinguish." As Mr. CARDWELL justly observed, "from that moment the knell of the Slave-trade was rung." With this example before us, we are asked to stay our hands just as the work is on the eve of accomplishment. There is no reason, however, why the policy which has proved so successful in Brazil should not be brought to an equally prosperous issue in Cuba; and when the Cuban trade is extinguished, this monstrous wickedness will have wholly disappeared from the face of the earth. This is a consummation at which it may suit the *Times* to sneer, but which we confess, for our part, we are not prepared to consider as something which "honest men ought to regard with contempt, or prudent men with horror."

There is one sophism running through the reasonings of the gentlemen who advocate the immunity of the Slave-trader, which illustrates so perfectly the nature of the moral and logical position they have taken up, that it may be worth while to examine it a little more at length. We are told, with all the pompous solemnity of economical platitude, that where there is a demand there will always be a supply, and that, consequently, so long as the Cubans desire to import slaves, the efforts of our squadron to prevent them must be in vain. Let us test this proposition by a few parallel instances. There is always a demand for cheap goods; but nothing is so cheap as that which is obtained at no cost; therefore there is always a demand for stolen articles. Consequently, there will always be thieves; and the inevitable conclusion, according to Mr. HURT, is, that there ought to be no policemen. Or again, there is a constant demand for tobacco which has not paid duty; therefore the smuggler will always exist; consequently the preventive service, in the phraseology of the *Times*, is a "national hypocrisy." If it be true, as these gentlemen argue, that no obstacles can really diminish the supply of an article for which there is a demand, we confess we wonder that they ever troubled themselves to denounce the time-honoured doctrines of Protection. We do not remember that even Mr. NEWDEGATE ever contended that the Sliding Scale did not diminish the importation of corn; but Mr. MILNER GIBSON and Mr. ROEBUCK are prepared to argue that a blockading squadron is no check whatever on the exportation of negroes. Perhaps these eminent Free-traders are of opinion that the Milan decrees were perfectly innocuous, if not positively advantageous to the trade of England, and that a prohibitive duty is no hindrance whatever to a supply of any commodity for which there is a demand. It is certainly a little amusing to hear, from the lips of these



Manchester economists, the novel doctrine that you can increase to any extent the risks, difficulties, and uncertainty of a trade, without in the least diminishing the capital which will flow into it, or the productiveness of which it is capable.

As to the argument that the repressive measures which we have adopted aggravate the horrors of the trade and increase the sufferings of those who are still its victims, all that it is necessary to say is, that the assertion is wholly unsupported by proof. The miseries of the middle passage do not date from the establishment of the blockading squadron. Those who are familiar with the early history of the Anti-Slave-trade agitation from the days of the poet COWPER, must know that those horrors were not less shocking when the trade was unrestrained and freely open to every adventurer. To increase the tortures previously practised we believe to be as impossible as it is to inflict more pain by fresh blows on the wretch already broken on the wheel. But even if the sufferings of the comparatively smaller number now exported were admitted to be greater than formerly, it must not be omitted from the consideration that it is proved beyond question that a vast number have, by our exertions, been wholly rescued from captivity and its attendant tortures.

The last bugbear which is reserved to frighten us from the course in which we have hitherto advanced with such signal success, is the terror of the difficulties in which our policy may involve us with foreign States. We are told, in the first place, that it is idle for us to persevere in the attempt to suppress a traffic which the French Government are bent upon encouraging. To this it is only necessary to reply, that we are by no means satisfied that the French have merited the suspicions which they have incurred. The late experiment at free immigration was certainly open to grave objections; but we are assured that the Government of France is alive to the mischief which it has occasioned, and is not unwilling to retrace its steps. At any rate, there is no fear that a country like France will venture openly to avow her complicity in a system of crime which the public opinion of civilized Europe has loudly condemned, and to the extinction of which she is herself committed by the most solemn obligations. The nature of our relations with the Cabinet of Washington on this question has been still more grossly misrepresented by the *Times*. So far from its being true that we are on the point of withdrawing our squadron from the coast of Cuba on account of the dangers in which it may involve us with the American authorities, we are informed by Mr. FITZGERALD that an arrangement has actually been concluded with the Government of the United States, by which an American squadron is to co-operate with our own for the suppression of the traffic in the Gulf. "The American ships," writes Lord NAPIER, "despatched to the Cuban waters, have been furnished with the usual instructions 'furnished to the vessels employed on the coast of Africa.'" There never probably was a period in the history of this question when we seemed nearer a complete and final victory than at this moment. If the civilized States of Europe will put upon Spain the pressure which they are entitled to exercise, we can see no reason why, in a very short space of time, this stain upon the human race should not be wiped out once and for ever.

It is satisfactory that at such a moment the Government and the Parliament of England should have spoken out in a clear and decisive manner. A comparison of the division which took place in 1850 on a similar motion by Mr. HURR, with the vote of Monday last, will show the sort of progress which the advocates of a retrograde policy have achieved. In 1850, Mr. HURR's proposition was supported by 154 votes against 232. In 1858, he finds just 24 members of the House of Commons to go into the lobby with him against 223, who peremptorily reject the principle which he propounds. What might have been the disastrous consequences of an opposite result it is fortunately not now necessary to conjecture. It is happily made plain to the world that, whatever dangers may encompass this question, and whatever sacrifices we may be called on to incur, the determination of the people of England is fixed to persist in a policy which history will record as more honourable to her name than all the conquests she has achieved, and all the empires she has founded.

Dissenting, as we have found it necessary to do on many occasions from the general foreign policy of Lord PALMERSTON, we feel it but justice to acknowledge the eminent services which he has rendered by his steady adhesion to, and vigorous prose-

cution of this great cause. While, however, we desire fully to recognise the beneficial effects which have attended his untiring exertions, we cannot altogether adopt the politico-religious line of reasoning by which he recommends his views to the House of Commons. He tells them that, in consequence of the efforts of England for the suppression of the Slave-trade, Divine Providence has blessed this country with an especial prosperity. We hope we shall not be supposed to impugn the belief in a moral government of the universe when we say that there is too much of successful crime and unrewarded merit in this world to permit us to employ so fallacious and unjustifiable a test of right and of wrong. The doctrine of special providences and particular judgments is not less dangerous when applied to nations than to individuals. The inscrutable ways of God to man are not to be judged by the transient phenomena of earthly success or failure. Such a line of argument only weakens a cause which is sufficiently strong in its own merits. If we know it to be right to struggle in a good cause, it is because we learn it from that conscience which God has implanted in the heart of nations, and not because our finances are flourishing and our Empire secure. It is enough for a nation, as for an individual, to persist with courage and with faith in that which is right and true—the reward of our labour is not to be made the criterion of the goodness of our cause. We have thought it necessary thus to express our dissent from the language of Lord PALMERSTON—whose views on all questions into which religious considerations enter seem to be singularly loose and inaccurate—because we feel it to be of the first importance to deliver a great cause from the pernicious overgrowth of a parasitical cant.

#### THE INDIAN DEBT.

THE Court of Proprietors have raised a question by their Petition to the House of Lords, which, if fairly entertained, would probably be found the most serious of all the difficulties occasioned by the wanton interference of Parliament with the existing Government of India. What will be the position of this country with reference to the public debt of India? Several times in the course of the protracted debates in the House of Commons, attention was called to the financial bearings of the projected revolution; but it was found hopeless to contend against the manifest disinclination of the House to look the difficulty fairly in the face. No sooner were the words "Indian debt" uttered, than the leaders of all parties steadfastly closed their ears. A few vague commonplaces were all that could be elicited, before the House shied off from the unwelcome topic. So far as we can gather the views of Parliament, it seems cordially to approve the clause of the India Bill by which the debt, both present and future, is declared to be exclusively charged upon the revenues of India. All parties have a natural horror of saddling this country with a burden which it has not hitherto reckoned among its liabilities. Every consideration, indeed, is in favour of confining, if possible, the obligation to repay the money borrowed by the Company to that branch of the administration which is intended to replace the Board of Directors. It is better that loans should be raised at Calcutta than in London, not merely to avoid occasional disturbances of our money market, but mainly because it is desirable to have a native body of creditors interested in maintaining the stability and credit of the Government on which they must depend for the security of their investments. It is true also that the holders of India bonds have advanced their money on the credit of the East India Company alone; and so long as their actual security—the revenue of India—is preserved unimpaired, they can have no right to ask for the better security of the English Government. They get four or five per cent. for their investments, and cannot expect an amount of security which corresponds to a rate of interest of little more than three per cent. To transfer the liability for the existing Indian debt to the Consolidated Fund, without a contemporaneous reduction of interest, would be nothing less than to add about thirty per cent. to the value of all these investments. It is no wonder, therefore, that the House should be gratified by the assurances of Ministers, that nothing is further from their intentions than to fix this country with a new debt; and if the provisions in the Bill directed to this object were anything better than the merest waste paper, we should heartily concur in the satisfaction with which the arrangement seems to be generally contemplated.

But it is one thing to escape an obligation, and a very different thing to shut our eyes to it. If, in spite of Ministerial speeches and express legislation, we are practically liable to make good any deficiency in the Indian revenues by which the payment of the annual charge for debt may be imperilled, the course which has been taken will prove infinitely worse than the prompt acknowledgment of an obligation which, if the pinch comes, we shall find it impossible to avoid. If we can go on borrowing on the credit of India alone, with the certainty of never being called upon to prop up the resources of the Secretary of State for India, it may perhaps be worth while to pay something like two per cent. in additional interest for the immunity which we shall thus enjoy. There are some who think that the large reduction of the annual charge which might be effected by pledging the credit of the Empire for the repayment of Indian loans, would be a sufficient compensation for the admitted disadvantage of converting an Indian into an English debt. Without going this length, it is enough to say that the blindest folly of all would be to pay the extra interest without the coveted exemption from liability. One would have imagined *a priori* that almost the first anxiety of the House of Commons would have been to ascertain that we had actually got the immunity for which it is proposed to pay more than 1,000,000*l.* per annum of additional interest. But it seems to have been thought quite sufficient to deny the obligation, without considering for a moment whether it will be possible to give effect to the denial should the failure of the Indian Exchequer unfortunately render it necessary to decide the question. And yet there are grave doubts, and something more, whether England will not become to all intents and purposes bound by policy, though not by law, to guarantee the regular payment of Calcutta dividends. It is quite certain that no amount of increase in the National Debt, nor any possible risks on account of Indian extravagance, would be a tenth part so injurious to this country, even in a merely pecuniary sense, as the loss of its financial credit. The power, and in a great degree the wealth, of England are due to the pre-eminent credit which our Government enjoys. It raises loans to almost any extent it pleases, at a rate which is twenty or thirty per cent. lower than would be exacted from the most reputable of the other Governments of the world. This is an element of strength and profit which it would be madness to tamper with; and if the repudiation of the Indian debt would cast the slightest stigma on the good faith and commercial credit of Great Britain, no statesman would ever dream of carrying out so suicidal a policy.

So long as India continues self-supporting, it is of course quite immaterial whether its debt is or is not backed up by an Imperial guarantee. Except in the contingency of the Indian treasury being exhausted, the liability of the Consolidated Fund, supposing it to attach, would not affect English tax-payers to the extent of a single shilling. But this contingency, however unlikely under a rational administration, is not altogether an impossible one. The probability of it is measured in the commercial world by the difference between three and five per cent. The extent of the apprehensions of the House of Commons is indicated by the extreme anxiety shown to save the revenues of Great Britain from the possibility of having to make good a deficit. Perhaps these fears are unduly exaggerated, though it must be observed that they do not imply an estimate of the stability of our Indian Empire at all below that which is formed of the principal European States. But whether the risk be great or small, the substantial question as to the liability of England cannot arise until the Indian Government enters into the list of repudiating States. Suppose that were to happen, and assume that the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER were to stand upon his bond, and refuse to make good a farthing of the debt. According to law, he would have right on his side, but credit rests not on legality but on reputation, and the material question which we should have to consider would be what the world would say to such sharp practice. Capitalists would see one department of Government avowedly bankrupt—would they be as ready as before to trust another branch of the same Administration? Could the Queen of ENGLAND be regarded as in full credit, while the Queen of INDIA was repudiating after the fashion of an American State? Suppose the untoward event happened, as would be most likely, at a time of financial pressure, or famine, or war, and that a loan had to be effected at home immediately after the insolvency of the Indian Exchequer, what sort of

terms would be got in the market from men of business whose Indian dividends had just been suspended? Why, we should lose more on our first loan of ten or twenty millions than any saving on the Indian debt would be likely to amount to; and we should, moreover, have damaged the credit of the country to an extent which it might take half a century to recover. If such a crisis came, every one would see this at once; and whether with a good or a bad grace, the Indian creditor would assuredly be paid out of the Consolidated Fund.

If these anticipations are not wholly without foundation, the policy of the present India Bill is about the most childish that can be imagined. For the sake of hugging an imaginary security, we are squandering vast annual sums out of the Indian revenues without the possibility of getting any return for the expenditure. We are so anxious for exemption, that although the substance is quite beyond our reach, we are content to pay the full price for the shadow. There would be cunning, if not honesty, in the policy of a debtor who made his creditors believe that they were getting a better security than he was really giving them. We are taking the opposite course. We are giving, in fact, the security of Great Britain, and we are taking the utmost possible pains to persuade our creditors that they have only got the inferior security of India. By this ingenious device we saddle ourselves with another million a year without reducing our ultimate liability by a single sixpence.

#### SPIRITUAL DESTITUTION.

THE large Blue-book just issued, containing the Report of the Select Committee of the Lords on Spiritual Destitution, is full of important matter. Its value consists in the evidence which it contains—though this, however, is unequal. Not one man of very commanding mind was examined; but many men intimately versed with the details, the successes, and the failures of the ministerial work conducted by the Church of England, have honestly, and in their way ably—though occasionally with the sound of the trumpet before their achievements, real or apparent—borne their testimony to the great deficiency in the existing means of spiritual instruction, and to the inability of the Church to cope with the ignorance and depravity of the population. Men of various schools and parties have had their say; and it is pleasant to record that there are few traces of sectarian spirit, or of the rancour of polemical differences, in the details of their experiences. There is a large amount of unsystematic earnestness at work. Each school has its own medicine for the social disease. The high churchman enlarges on the advantages of mission colleges—the low churchman on the uses of half-taught Scripture readers. One advocates the infinite subdivision of parishes—another is strongly in favour of a Head Rector with a staff of subordinate curates. Here pews and pew-rents, there Sunday trading—in one parish, scanty endowments, in another, the operation of the Burial Board—are denounced as the sources of all our religious shortcomings; while, on the other hand, more services and shorter services, more churches, or more clergy without more churches—and school churches, and iron churches, and city churches to be moved into the suburbs—are among the suggestions of the over-worked and ill-paid clergy. In the authoritative recommendations of the Committee we do not find much novelty. They present in a compact and available form the facts and statistics of the case—they somewhat timidly hint at a better appropriation of the funds of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners—they glance at the evils of the Pew system—they suggest a relaxation of the Mortmain Acts—and they stamp with a vague approval every private attempt at bringing religious influences to bear on individuals. More than this the Committee could not do. They have done well in condensing the facts of the case; but the evil, being one connected with the social condition of the human race, certainly of our own country, demands a broader and wider investigation than lies within the scope—perhaps within the capacity—of a Select Committee. Their object was a narrow one—it was simply to investigate the deficiency of means of spiritual instruction and places of Divine worship. In other words, they have worked the equation between churches and clergymen on the one side, and population on the other; and, could the two terms be made to balance, it is suggested, though not said, that the difficulty would be at an end.

But would it be so? The Committee has confined its in-



vestigations to populous towns. Is not the very same state of things, however, to be found in rural districts? Would not the Bishops of SALISBURY, or HEREFORD, or ROCHESTER, complain that, after all, spiritual shortcomings are just as rife in our village as in our urban populations? Is not the village church often just as empty as the town church? Or—to put the difficulty in another way—is going to church or neglecting it a conclusive proof of religion or irreligion at all? All that the Committee investigates is the church-going habits of the poor—a mere matter of statistics which proves but little in the way of solving the larger and deeper question of the hold which religious duty and accountability have on the people of England. It is not missions to the poor alone—not special services to the working-classes—that will cure the great and multiform social evils of the age. Neglect of the means of grace is just as common among the educated as among the uneducated classes; and if preaching in the streets is wanted, so is preaching in the counting-house and the shop, at the family hearth, in the study, in the senate, and in the hall, or even in the parsonage, as much as in the cottage. We do not complain that the Lords have not gone into these matters, because they were not within the margin of their brief. But these are the things that we want.

Take the Church of England alone. It no longer speaks with authority. Its influence mainly depends on individuals. Given every facility demanded by the most ardent innovators—let the services be shortened and multiplied—let the preachers be increased and the churches rearranged—let the sermons be better and the cathedrals opened—and what then? It is impossible, were it desirable, that the Church of England should speak with a uniform and imperative voice; and if it did, it could not, in an age of free inquiry, silence those who gainsay its doctrines and reject its order. It is the price we pay for religious freedom that this very freedom should neutralize the action of religion. External conformity to any form of religion is, and we must expect that it will be, neglected so long as it is held to be indifferent what form we choose. If we may choose any, we may equally neglect all. We are far from adopting M. COMTE's historical survey of the stages of intellectual development; but when the ages of Faith have departed, the ages of general church-attendance have departed also. The Church of England retains the theory of worship in its sacramental and hierarchical system; but its mission—at least that shape of its mission which it now cultivates—is, as the tone of this very Report shows, viewed in its merely human aspect. How people are to be brought into immediate connexion with an individual pastor—how he can most favourably attract their confidence—how he can render himself popular—these are our inquiries. They are very important inquiries, too; but they are of an individual, not of a systematic, character. So long as the Church of England exhibits its present character—and it certainly is not likely to exhibit any other—of rival schools and teachers, of perpetually recurring difficulties and disputes about its own meaning and intention, of different interpretations as to whether it is a Divine institution or a voluntary spiritual club, it must be content to be very inefficient. It is true that inadequate endowments and a paucity of clergymen are serious hindrances to its work; but the fact of Puritans and Romanizers existing side by side—the fact of angry and confronting Societies for Foreign Missions, and for Home Missions, and for every branch of the Church's work—the fact of "Tractarians" and "Evangelicals"—the fact of Mr. GORHAM and Mr. DENISON, and Mr. POOLE—the fact of the Bishop of EXETER and the Bishop of RIPON—the fact of Exeter Hall preachers and those of St. Barnabas—these are the things that really account for the necessity which the present Blue-book indicates, but which it will not remedy.

And what is true of the Church of England is true also of the whole Christian world. We only see in this country a special and accidental modification of what pervades the whole of Christendom. It may be that general cultivation and a general sense of duty, which are the unquestionable results of Christianity, are deepening their roots in the European mind; but everywhere the Church, as such, holds men's minds with a feeble grasp, and attendance on the external forms of worship is passing away. Every country could, if it were honest, produce a Blue-book just as appalling and disheartening as the Bishop of EXETER's. It is enough for us all not to extenuate the evil, not to apologize for it—perhaps not to be aghast at it—but to register it. The power of the Keys has passed away—the influence of the Pulpit which succeeded to

it, is tottering, if it has not fallen. We may do our best to revive the sense and the love of worship, and to extend, as we are very properly urged to do, all opportunities of bringing men to worship. But there will remain thousands, or it may be millions, of minds, in the actual chaos of personal religious convictions, to whom these appeals will be made in vain. We do not say that schools and books can supersede, or ought to supersede, the externals of religion; but when we must look out for the failure of the altar and the pulpit, it must be ours to Christianize men out of Church, if we cannot bring them into it. And hence others than the clergy can do a working man's work in our generation.

#### GENTLEMEN AUTHORS.

IN the days when Pope lashed the victims of the Dunciad, there was struck out a theory of the genteel pretensions of authors, which was very clear, and to those on the right side of the hedge very satisfactory. There was to be, on the one hand, a knot of polite well-bred men, possessed of true learning and genius, the companions of statesmen, the associates of fashionable wits, the oracles and models of an Augustan age. On the other hand, there was to be Grub-street with its greasy historians and translators, its flea-bitten, bailiff-driven booksellers' hacks, its starving, low, virulent poets and dunces. But a hundred years have changed all that. The greatest literary man of the last half of the eighteenth century came out of Grub-street and conquered the polite world by something that was better than gentility. Society, too, has fined off into a series of imperceptible gradations, and in the world of authorship, as in the sphere of other callings, there is no saying where gentility begins or ends. Mr. Thackeray, in his last number of the *Virginians*, has stigmatized some of his critics as "Young Grub-street." But Young Grub-street would not answer to the name, would hold up its head with imperturbable coolness, and be apt to call out "Old Grub-street" in return. Society gains a great deal, if it also loses something, by this superficial equality; and although privately it is impossible not to make distinctions, convenience and courtesy equally bid us pronounce that all the authors of the present day are gentlemen. Still there are certain literary occupations which at least make us wonder that a gentleman will venture to engage in them. There is, for instance, the province of contemporary biography, and of living on the bodily presence and the mental characteristics of an eminent man. And when the eminent man is himself a writer, then there are no limits to what may be said, or to the manner of saying it. The biographer can have his fling, and can gratify vulgar curiosity by the minuteness of his description, and himself by the ingenuity of his invidious praise. As an example—a rather singular example—we may take a portrait of Mr. Thackeray, which has lately appeared in a paper called *Town-Talk*, and which, as the whole literary world knows, has subsequently been acknowledged by Mr. Edmund Yates. It is not often that one gentleman author goes so plainly and directly into particulars about another, as Mr. Yates does in the following passage:—

Mr. Thackeray is forty-six years old, though from the silvery whiteness of his hair he appears somewhat older. He is very tall, standing upwards of six feet two inches, and as he walks erect his height makes him conspicuous in every assembly. His face is bloodless, and not particularly expressive, but remarkable for the fracture of the bridge of the nose, the result of an accident in youth. He wears a small grey whisker, but otherwise is clean shaven. No one meeting him could fail to recognise in him a gentleman; his bearing is cold and uninviting, his style of conversation either openly cynical, or affectedly good-natured and benevolent; his *bonhomie* is forced, his wit biting, his pride easily touched—but his appearance is invariably that of the cool, suave, well-bred gentleman, who, whatever may be ranking within, suffers no surface display of his emotion.

To do this kind of biographical business is a strange pursuit for an author and a gentleman. If print were not the vehicle of expression, and a writer were not the subject, it would be thought offensive to be so personal, and coarse to be so plain-spoken. But there is certainly the defence that contemporary biography sells well, and that, the more personal and plain-spoken it is, the better it sells. And even if Mr. Yates has, we will not say endangered, but tested his reputation as a gentleman author by penning and selling this hue-and-cry delineation of a fellow writer, it may perhaps be doubted whether there is not a sort of justice in Mr. Thackeray being the victim; for Mr. Thackeray is the great creator and support of the "new profession"—that of what is euphemistically called lecturing, but what is really taking a man's personal appearance into the market. When any one man has written works which have been read by thousands, and has excited an interest in large classes of the population, there are sure to be a great many persons that would like to see the man himself whose writings they know so well. They like to see him, and to say they have seen him. Mr. Thackeray has thought, and others have thought with him, that there was money to be made largely and easily out of this curiosity. Why should he not show himself? There is a character in *Evelina* who goes to the play every evening, on the plea that he is willing to pay five shillings a night in order that his friends may see he is alive. Mr. Thackeray effected the same object much more cleverly, and made other persons pay him the five shillings, that they might see he was alive. He took into the

market his "silvery hair," his "bloodless and not particularly expressive face," his "fractured nose," and his "small grey whiskers." He sold a good stare at them to thousands of curious and eager purchasers. Mr. Thackeray was a gentleman by birth and education, and he probably knew that this publicity of private life—this coining money out of his personal appearance—was not a proceeding of a very high stamp. He was, we may suppose, aware that reserve and a hatred of vulgar notoriety are marks of a gentleman's character and bearing. But really the thing was so lucrative. There was nothing wrong in it; and why should he not put his pride in his pocket if he put a heavy purse there too? We do not pretend to quarrel with his decision; but there certainly is some reason why he should complain less than most men of being photographed by Mr. Yates. Mr. Thackeray makes money by showing himself at a lecture, and Mr. Yates makes money by describing what is shown. We do not pretend that the two things are exactly the same, but then Mr. Thackeray and Mr. Yates are not exactly in the same literary position; and if it was, as we hope, a descent for Mr. Yates to draw this biographical portrait, it was indisputably a descent for a man of honourable family and good education to make the tour of the platforms that bid highest for a peep at him.

It would, however, be very unfair if we did not acknowledge that it is extremely hard to sacrifice a large sum of money for a mere punctilio—that most men, and most critics, if tried, would prefer the money to so shadowy a thing as self-approbation—and that there are always a hundred good reasons why money should be made. Few men love themselves, or think more anxiously and wisely for themselves, than parents do for their children, while yet their hopes for their issue are high, and they have not been disheartened by bitter experience. Now, let us suppose that the darling of a family is a mischievous, olive-coloured, hump-backed little pickle. The parents promise themselves that they will keep and cherish this strange nursing for ever. But Barnum comes that way, and settles that this is exactly the child for an "Original Chinese Dwarf." He proposes a moderate sum to the parents, and is repulsed with scorn. He is not to be beaten back, and bids higher and higher. At last the point is reached when the parents begin to hesitate. They picture all that they could do with the money, and are secretly a little flattered by the urgency of the speculator. Finally they are overcome by what they consider a sense of duty. It will be so obviously for the advantage of their little boy that he should be the Well-known Chinese Dwarf, and common prudence enjoins that they should look to the future, and provide a comfortable maintenance for the poor lad. And so the affair is arranged, and Jemmy goes away in a caravan. If parents who act thus are guilty of a weakness, it is a weakness from which few would escape. It might indicate a more noble and generous feeling if they had preferred poverty and privacy for their darling; but after all they have acted prudently, and have done no harm. Just so, we must admit that all Mr. Thackeray would have gained by refusing to be Barnumized, was something infinitesimal and inappreciable; and he would have lost a sum of money which the aspect of a bloodless face and a broken nose can rarely procure. To go to market with himself, and satisfy curiosity at a scale of prices regulated according to proximity, was not to do anything dishonourable. It was not anything ungentlemanly, like cheating at cards, or telling a lie. It was, at worst, an offence against taste; and all that could be said about it was that it tended to degrade literature and to foster the appetite for intrusion into other men's affairs, which is apt to be imperitously gratified at the special expense of authors. We can easily conceive that, although a man of Mr. Thackeray's sensibility would perceive that to do this was a departure from the strictest code of high feeling, yet calm philosophy would tell him that such a departure might be justified by a large pecuniary profit. We feel sure that, in some way or other, he thought it only due to himself or to others to let Barnum have his Chinese Dwarf; and it is certain that nine-tenths of any number of persons subjected to the same trial would have decided as he did, and that the few who might decide otherwise would have very little of palpable and visible advantage to show as a compensation for the money they rashly threw away.

We may even admit that it is a debateable point whether there is any derogation from his position in a gentleman going about in his literary caravan. It may be argued that he is still the same man, with the same feelings, opinions, and principles, and that he is only combating the essentially ungentlemanly notion that a man ceases to be a gentleman when he earns his bread honestly in an unusual way. Looking only to the individual, this is to a great extent true, and we must own that Mr. Thackeray is the same man alike when we have paid our five shillings for the privilege of looking at him, and when we have enjoyed it gratis. But if we turn our thoughts to the whole literary profession, we are inclined to think that the bad effect of a vendible publicity is discoverable. Mr. Thackeray might maintain that Mr. Yates was taking rather a liberty with him, if he had not himself provided his biographer with a sufficient excuse. That a man near the head of a calling should entitle his inferiors to take a liberty with him, is in itself an evil. At any rate, if we are not to say that it is derogatory to Mr. Thackeray to show himself, nor to Mr. Yates to photograph the show, we may venture to admire more unmixedly those

who set themselves against this literary unreserve. It is not one of the least debts of gratitude that the country owes to the Laureate, that he has always consistently maintained that a gentleman is not to be intruded upon, nor to intrude himself on others, because he has a gift for verse-making. If we recognise the common-sense which says that money is better than a punctilio, we may also sympathize with the nobler scorn which refuses to let fame degenerate into notoriety. No one who even knows Mr. Thackeray only by his books, and has not the honour of an acquaintance which the first gentleman in the kingdom might be pleased to possess, can doubt that he is a man of honour and high feeling. But he has made what, if judged on other than pecuniary grounds, appears to us a mistake. Against this mistake Mr. Tennyson has repeatedly protested, and we think that he has chosen the better part.

#### COURT OF APPEAL IN CRIMINAL CASES.

IF the late debate on the establishment of a Court of Appeal in Criminal Cases did not display any remarkable degree of legal learning or tact, it had at least the merit of committing the House of Commons to a principle of the highest importance to the proper administration of justice in this country. The subject is one to which we have often directed attention, and unless both the evil and the remedy are kept clearly in view, it is almost certain that the measure ultimately adopted will be either mischievous or delusive. It is urged, on the one hand, that it is a monstrous hardship that, in a case involving property merely, a litigant should have an absolute right, if he pleases, to move for a new trial, whilst in a case of life and death the verdict of a single jury is final; and it is replied, on the other hand, that if the same liberty were allowed in both cases the appeal would always be made when the convict could afford it, and that the consciousness that their verdict was not final would induce juries to convict upon a smaller amount of evidence than they require at present. There is a certain amount of truth in each of these arguments, but they do not go to the root of the question. What really requires amendment is not so much the Law Courts as the Home Office. The really important reform would depend upon a recognition of the principle that the granting of pardons is a branch of the judicial office, and not a mere act of sovereign power. No one, we think, who has fully considered the subject would wish to see convicts empowered to move for a new trial simply at their own pleasure. The real want is that of some competent authority which could, if further evidence were produced or if the judge himself were in doubt, send the case for trial a second time. We will shortly explain the machinery which at present discharges this function in a very lame and imperfect manner, and the way in which, in our opinion, it might be improved so as to answer all the objects proposed.

There is, and for a long time past there has existed, a Court of Appeal in Criminal Cases, which sits in a private room in the Home Office, and of which the Secretary and one of the Under-Secretaries of State for that department are the judges. Practically, Mr. Waddington (of whom we wish to speak with all respect) is the principal judge. In discharging this function he has no assistance from the Bar, nor has he any power of examining witnesses or administering an oath. He is a mere private gentleman, no doubt possessed of great experience and ability, but forming his judgment as to guilt or innocence exclusively, we believe, upon documentary evidence. The maxims upon which he proceeds were stated in a Parliamentary paper published about two years ago. The first is, that no sentence is carried out with which the presiding judge is dissatisfied; and the second, that no application for a pardon upon the ground of innocence will be entertained unless the convict can produce evidence which was not submitted to the jury, and can account satisfactorily for its non-production at his trial. In short, the Home Office will not reverse the verdict of a jury merely on the ground of a different estimate of the weight of evidence; but if new evidence comes to light, it will re-try the whole cause from the beginning. To such a re-trial there are, we think, insuperable objections. In the first place, it is a trial in the dark, and on documentary evidence; and in the second place, as in case of the prisoner's innocence it only results in a pardon, it is far from removing the stigma which was caused in the first instance by his conviction; and it is surely a great hardship that a person whose innocence has been proved should in no case obtain more than a remission of a punishment which he never deserved.

We should propose that the first step to a new trial should be by petition to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and that that body should in all cases grant that petition, as of course, if the judge who presided at the trial formally intimated to them that he was dissatisfied with the verdict, or if at any future time material witnesses for the Crown were convicted of perjury at the original trial, or if any other conviction took place which implied the innocence of the original convict. In the absence of such conditions, they might perform, if necessary with the assistance of the Secretary and Under-Secretary for the Home Office, the same sort of functions as the Home Office now performs alone; and if their inquiries produced any substantial doubt in their minds, they ought to have power to summon witnesses to administer oaths, and to direct the case, if they thought fit, to be argued for the Crown and for the prisoner by counsel in open court. Upon



this argument they should have power to refuse or to grant a new trial, either in the same county in which the conviction took place, or in any other which might be preferable for that purpose. It would also be desirable that in such cases they should have power, in their discretion, to allow the prisoner costs of witnesses and counsel, as in the few cases in which wrong convictions take place they are often to be attributed to the poverty of the convict. They should also be empowered to release the prisoner on bail pending the second trial, if they thought it right to do so; and it would be no more than justice that, if the prisoner were finally acquitted, his original sentence should not only become null and void *ab initio*, but that he should have a right to compensation from the public.

It can hardly be said that such a system as this would tend either to produce delay, to diminish the responsibility of juries, or to increase the chance that the guilty would escape. The Committee would in all cases have the power of refusing absolutely, and without assigning any cause whatever, to entertain the application. Matters would thus be in exactly the same state as they are in now when the Home Office "sees no reason to recommend her Majesty to prevent the law from taking its course." If they did entertain the application, the ordeal through which the prisoner would have to pass would be far stricter than it is at present. The Home Office decides on an *ex parte* statement made by or on behalf of the prisoner himself, and has only the most imperfect means of testing its accuracy. The Privy Council would have the opportunity of hearing, not only evidence on oath, but in important cases counsel on both sides. And it can hardly be supposed that a tribunal composed of some four or five veteran judges would be likely to be unduly favourable to accused persons, or to be swayed by sentimental or popular considerations. In fact, we believe that though such a system as we propose would be far more just than that which is actually in operation, it would be less favourable to prisoners than the existing one, whilst it would avoid many scandals by which the administration of justice is at present not unfrequently defaced. Nothing is more common in the present day than to see a prisoner who is convicted of murder transported for life, because the authorities at the Home Office cannot quite make up their minds whether he ought to be hanged; and cases are not unknown in which inquiries altogether extrajudicial, and conducted under circumstances of which the law takes no notice, have been allowed to reverse the solemn verdict of a jury. A few years ago, two men were convicted in one of the midland counties of rape committed on a dumb girl, who gave her evidence through an interpreter. Some doubts arose as to the truth of her story, which turned principally on the direction of certain footpaths, and on the degree of credit which might be due to witnesses for the prisoners, who attempted to prove an *alibi*. With a laudable desire to do justice, the judge who had tried the case went down in the course of the long vacation, to the scene of the alleged crime, examined the place, and the witnesses, and virtually though informally, re-tried the case. He satisfied himself of the innocence of the prisoners, and they received a free pardon. Such an investigation, though creditable to the judge who undertook it, is far from creditable to the system which required it. It proves conclusively that occasions do occur in which new trials would be most desirable, and it needs no proof that the worst possible form of a new trial is one in which neither judge nor witnesses have any official character, authority, or responsibility whatever.

One of the arguments made use of by Mr. Lowe in discussing this subject is so characteristic, and we must say so reprehensible, that it requires separate notice. We give, said that gentleman, too many chances of escape to the guilty as it is—why should we give more? They have better treatment than they deserve, in most respects, and if there are any defects in the system, they are in the nature of set-offs, of which they have no right to complain. This is precisely the old sporting theory of law. Society is to give a castle, and criminals to give a knight. As we acquit ten guilty people, we have surely a right now and then to punish one innocent man. If Mr. Barber was transported, M. Bernard was acquitted. Give and take must apply here as well as elsewhere. This is the theory on which all the old iniquities of the law were defended. A prisoner was hung for shoplifting, and had no counsel in cases of felony, but then he could challenge twenty jurors peremptorily, and might escape if the clerk wrote *murdredavit* for *murderavit*. What an unreasonable person he was to complain! Surely the proper course is to act with uniform justice, and not with alternate paroxysms of injustice in opposite directions. It is as much for the common interest that the innocent should escape as that the guilty should be convicted; and, strange as it may appear to Mr. Lowe, it is true that the same measure usually favours both objects.

#### WESTWARD HO! FOR GOLD.

SIR BULWER LYTTON has not been a day too early in providing an effective Government for New Caledonia. A few months ago the province was a nameless district tenanted by Couteaus and Black Feet, and visited only by a few officials of the moribund Hudson's Bay Company. In a few months more it will resound with the hum of gold-diggers' cradles, varied by the occasional crack of a rifle aimed at some unlucky redskin. Already the official reports announce the arrival of a thousand

diggers, the outpourings of California, ready for toil or tumult, and armed with spades, picks, and revolvers. It is strange to see what restless Bohemians the gold explorers have become. California is producing gold-dust at the rate of many millions a year; but no sooner is the rumour heard that 1000 ounces have been picked up in the British territory, than a regular exodus begins from the proved mines of the American State to the unexplored El Dorado of Fraser's river. From the known to the unknown is the natural bent of these adventurers. The spirit of gambling is the motive power, and uncertainty is the greatest possible stimulus. So eagerly have the stray population of California set their faces towards the colony, that a regular traffic by land and sea is already organized, and ships and bullock-trains cannot be found fast enough to accommodate the restless searchers for unexplored mines of wealth.

Men who probably regard themselves as philosophical observers are palpably infected by the prevailing mania, and it is strange to find the *Times*' correspondent, while recounting the preparations for an exodus from the once attractive fields of California, speculating on the probability of a similar rush from England, and congratulating the unlucky proprietors of the *Leviathan* on the magnificent opportunity which is opened for turning their unwieldy property to account. But however we may be astonished at the ferment which the news of the British diggings has excited among the miners of California, the effect will undoubtedly be to convert an uninhabited wilderness into a turbulent, but, we may hope, at the same time a thriving colony. Already an overland route has been explored from San Francisco, said to be practicable in eighteen days. Huge trains of mules and horses have been organized to convey provisions to the miners who are plunging into a country that produces nothing in the shape of food, apparently without a thought for anything but the gold which tempts them. Throughout California the population is described as "on the move," and every available steamer is put on to the new line from San Francisco to the capital of Vancouver's Island.

It is satisfactory to find that Sir Bulwer Lytton, in his last despatch, states that the Government have it in contemplation to detach a force for the preservation of law and order in the new gold fields; for no time is to be lost if it is hoped to substitute regular government for the dominion of Judge Lynch, who will otherwise become omnipotent for the first time in a British colony. As yet, Governor Douglas only exercises an authority which is neither valid *de jure* nor *de facto*. His legal jurisdiction is limited to Vancouver's Island, and his actual power extends no further than the issuing of proclamations which no one appears to regard. Payments for licenses are nominally exacted from the diggers; and the privilege of navigating Fraser's river is theoretically confined to adventurers who have applied for and obtained the permit of the Hudson's Bay Company. But the flood of immigration by the land route will certainly defeat these attempts to exercise jurisdiction, and even the sea-going immigrants by way of Vancouver's island seem already to have discovered that the Governor's regulations may be disregarded with impunity. It is possible that the assertion of British supremacy may ultimately prove useful, even though it is at present impracticable to enforce it; but no time should be lost in despatching an adequate military force to maintain the authority of the Government over the 50,000 Californian adventurers who are already on their way to the new colony.

One of the most striking facts in this last exhibition of the power of the gold fever is the apparent inadequacy of the motive which has created so sudden and extensive a migration. When the auriferous character of California was first discovered it is said that not less than 150,000 ounces of gold dust were exported during the first eight months. An equal period since the cry of gold on Thompson's and Fraser's rivers has not furnished so much as 1000 ounces. It is true that the Indians have learned better to appreciate the value of the mineral deposits in their country, and have done their best to obstruct the attempts of the scattered immigrants to gather the golden harvest; but, on the other hand, gold-seeking has become a well understood trade and ought to produce much greater results than were attained in the same length of time ten or a dozen years ago. It is difficult therefore to suppose, notwithstanding the general rush from the old diggings, that the British gold fields are likely to exceed in productiveness the neighbouring mines of California. The geological formation is, indeed, reported to be of the most favourable kind, and enough seems to be established to avert any serious fear of general disappointment on a scale likely to cause a desertion of the now attractive region. It may be looked upon as tolerably certain that the territory so lately in the exclusive occupation of a fur-trading company has already taken the first step in a continuous progress towards effectual colonization. The merchants of Victoria in the Island are described by the Governor as rejoicing in the increase of wealth and business produced by the influx of so many strangers; and it is satisfactory to find that, among the supposed inducements to settle down in New Caledonia, the privilege of living under the dominion of British authorities is appreciated even by the rough and ready crew of disappointed miners who form the vanguard of the advance.

We often talk of the advantages of a strong Government at home, but to men who are plunging into wilds like those where the gold has just been discovered, a strong Government is a necessity in a very different sense. They will need power to

protect them from savages and plunderers, and even from one another; and though the immigrant population is probably as little disposed to submit to authority as any community in the world, the necessity of their position will, it may be hoped, convert them into obedient subjects. Everything, however, will depend on the military strength which may be placed at the disposal of the Governor, and on the energy with which it may be employed in the difficult task of keeping order and subordination among the diggers. So far as appears at present, Governor Douglas has shown himself fully alive to the responsibility of his position, and he is spoken of as a man who is not likely to prove unequal to the task which an accidental discovery has thrown upon him. His available strength at present is limited to the crew of the *Satellite*, none of whom are yet reported to have run off to the diggings; but it is clearly impossible, without considerable addition to his resources, for him to attempt to enforce his regulations, or to assert with effect the supremacy of the Crown by levying a tax on the operations of the miners.

It is not only on one point that the protection of an efficient military police will be required. At various places along the banks of Fraser River, at Thompson's Forks, and in a tributary stream which rejoices in the euphonious name of the Nikowemen River, auriferous deposits have been found, and it is likely that the exertions of so many prospectors as are by this time in the country will quickly extend the area of operations. Rapids in the streams and hostile Indians on the banks are not favourable to locomotion, and though the distances are not very great, the different locations are many days' journey from each other. To keep up any government at all in such a district, detachments will be needed at various points, and it may pretty confidently be predicted that Governor Douglas will have as much upon his hands as any man need desire. After the experience of California and Australia, it will not be from any lack of knowledge if New Caledonia is not protected from the evils which spring up so easily from an auriferous soil; and if a reasonable amount of judgment and care is exercised by our Government at home, and by the authorities on the spot, we may hope that the new colony will prove a model gold-field, where the enterprise of eager adventurers will not be allowed to degenerate into lawlessness and disorder.

#### GLACIERS AND GLACIER THEORIES.

A GREAT mountain is generally buttressed up by minor ridges that radiate from the central mass. Deep in the hollows between, lie valleys that give access to its interior recesses. The earlier explorers who, without the aids of modern science, sought to gain a knowledge of such regions, obtained from each successive valley into which they penetrated new and entirely different glimpses of the crags and peaks that form the nucleus of the group. Seeing the same summit under totally different aspects, they often gave it many distinct names, and laid it down as so many separate and isolated mountains in their first rude maps; and, just as often, they confounded different and even distant points under a single designation. Only when they were able to ascend to some commanding height could they correct their first impressions, and approach to a juster conception of the true position and connexion of the vast masses each of which had before been a separate source of wonder and admiration.

With exacter methods of observation to aid them, later travellers acquired ampler and more accurate knowledge. As huge bones of an extinct mammoth fall into their places at the word of the skilful anatomist, the giant fragments of the world's rock-skeleton were marshalled into their true relative position, and the connecting ridges that link them together were supplied. But though the art of the map-maker might satisfy the reason, very different was the keen enjoyment and sense of reality to him who first, from the topmost crag or glittering ice-ridge of a Monte Rosa or an Ararat, was permitted to seize in a single glance the order and enchainment of the intricate groups of attendant pinnacles that cluster round such mountain monarchs. Something similar to this has been the progress of natural science. Ascending from the observation of some facts in external nature to the study of the laws that regulate them, men found that these laws were somehow connected with other laws—that in pursuing different aspects of nature, they were led into parallel or often into identical tracks of inquiry, till mounting step by step, they reached the discovery of some great and general truth. Some way has been made towards the construction of an intellectual map which shall give a completer view of the connexion of the different branches of science. The workers are pressing on, and it would appear as if some of the more advanced pioneers wanted but little to gain a further eminence whence they could descry at once the true relation of large and still separated fields of human knowledge. Clouds hang about these summits, but does it not seem as if a slight clearing of the mist would enable a Faraday, or some of his followers, to accomplish the last remaining steps of such an ascent? True it is, that like the unapproachable summits of the Himalaya, which tower into an atmosphere too rare to support human life, the ultimate truths of science may be for ever beyond the utmost efforts of man; but the progress upward, even within a single generation, has been so vast and sure, that we count with confidence upon a long course of further accessions to our knowledge of nature's laws.

The parallel we have ventured to draw is one naturally suggested by the subject before us. Though they must have always ranked amongst the grandest and most striking of natural objects, glaciers attracted but little of the attention of men of science until physical geology, demanding from every branch of human knowledge its contribution towards the past history of our planet, set men inquiring into their nature and functions. It was long known that in the higher parts of the Swiss Alps there exist vast accumulations of ice, filling valleys many miles in length, and that these masses sometimes descend into the lower valleys to the level of the villages and corn-fields, and there rapidly dissolve in a climate which for half the year is much warmer than that of our islands. It needed only to remark that, in spite of this rapid thaw, the lower end of a glacier remained year after year at about the same point—sometimes advancing a little, sometimes retiring—to be convinced that the waste must be supplied by the gradual advance downwards of the entire mass. Yet until the time of Saussure—the only man of science who, up to twenty years ago, had observed the glaciers with any attention—the simple fact of the motion of glaciers was not generally admitted; and even after the first three volumes of his *Travels* had been published, a German professor wrote to prove that their motion was a physical impossibility, a leading scientific periodical declaring his demonstration to be complete.

When geologists seized this fact of the onward movement of great masses of ice, bearing uninjured on their surface fragments of rock, sometimes of enormous size, from the highest crests of the Alps into deep valleys fifteen or twenty miles distant, they hastened to make use of this new and powerful agent to explain much that had been obscure in the past history of the globe. The transport of masses of rock, known as Erratic Blocks, into districts composed of entirely different materials, separated from their apparent birth-place by intermediate valleys, and even by lakes or arms of the sea, was at once accounted for by the supposed extension of ancient glaciers. If we now had glaciers twenty miles, why, it was asked, might they not have extended to ten times that distance, or even more. Here, again, they found an agent competent to accomplish that rounding away of the projecting angles of rocks, that smoothing and polishing of exposed surfaces, which is continually seen in the valleys of the Alps and of other mountainous countries. If the more cautious geologists hesitated to accept some of the rather bold conjectures that were founded on the imagined extent of ancient glaciers in various parts of the world, they did not fail to recognise the importance of glacier agency in the past as well as the present condition of the earth. One of our most accomplished and ingenious geologists has indeed carried back the existence of glaciers to an epoch of dim antiquity, even in the reckoning of that science whose chronology is counted in millions of years. Professor Ramsay has shown ground for believing that in the fragments of rock that go to make up the conglomerates of the Permian strata, intermediate between the Old and the New Red Sandstone, there is still preserved a record of the action of ice, either in glaciers or floating icebergs, before those strata were consolidated.

When glaciers were found to play so important a part in the history of the world, it became natural to inquire further into their nature. And first, as to their motion. The fact was indisputable, but a satisfactory mode of accounting for it was not easily found. Hundreds of visitors went every year to the Mer de Glace of Chamouni. They saw a long, narrow, crooked valley, varying in breadth from a mile and a half to about half a mile, hemmed in on either side by inaccessible crags and pinnacles of granite, the whole bottom of the valley filled up with ice, hard and compact within, but rough and crumbling where exposed to the weather—the surface in some parts unbroken and undulating like our chalk downs, but oftener rent by yawning fissures many hundred feet in depth, one set of fissures sometimes crossing another at right angles, and so cutting up the ice in fantastic pinnacles and towers that now and again toppled over with a fearful crash. Saussure, confirming the notion of an older writer, had asserted that a glacier advances by sliding along its bed, which is constantly lubricated by the melting of the under surface of the ice. But those who looked with a little attention at the Mer de Glace can scarcely have been satisfied with this explanation. How, they might ask, did the great mass adapt itself to the form of the valley as it moved onward? Above all, how did it squeeze itself, as if through the neck of a bottle, so as to pass that narrow gateway at Trélaporte, where it is reduced to less than one-half of its previous width?

A sagacious Swiss geologist, M. Charpentier, and M. Agassiz, a naturalist of wide celebrity, undertook to solve the problem, and propounded what is known as the Dilatation Theory of Glacier Motion. In summer time, said M. Charpentier, the ice of the glacier, which is porous and full of minute fissures, becomes soaked with water melted during the day. The cold of the night freezes this water, which expands in that process, and thus the whole mass of the glacier swells with irresistible force, and the result is to drive it in the direction of least resistance, down the valley. The theory was worthless, for it was founded on a radical error. The cold of the night, though it generally freezes water on the surface, does not penetrate beyond the mere upper crust of the glacier; and the supposed expansion is, therefore, simply an impossibility. But in spite of this, the theory was indirectly of service to science. M. Agassiz felt it to be necessary to appeal



to observation to establish the views which he had accepted and shared. For several successive seasons—first in a rude stone hut built upon the glacier itself, afterwards lodged in a more substantial dwelling on the banks of the great glacier of the Ar—Agassiz, with a party of fellow-labourers, continued to accumulate observations upon the structure and movements of the ice. Their perseverance and self-devotion deserve all praise, but their labour was to a great degree wasted. The inquiries in which they were engaged demanded a correct knowledge of the principles of physical and mechanical science. In such matters the keen eye of the naturalist and the industry of the most laborious observer are used in vain, if they do not know what the facts are which it is important for them to watch and to record. Yet this appeal to the living authority of nature, followed by other observers, and continued to this time, has probably been the source of all the knowledge subsequently obtained.

Professor James Forbes, of Edinburgh, urged by the example of Agassiz, undertook, in 1842, a series of observations from which dates the commencement of all sound and accurate knowledge of glacier motion. He perceived that it was idle to frame theories as to the cause of the advance of glaciers until the laws regulating their motion had been correctly ascertained. A few simple observations, well selected, conducted with accuracy, and prolonged, with some interruption, throughout three months, established conclusively the chief laws of glacier motion. He showed that a glacier advances by a slow, steady, unceasing progress, so uniform at any given point in its course that it is almost possible to tell the hour of the day by the progress of a point fixed on the surface; but that the motion is somewhat slower at night and during cold weather. The rate of advance is not uniform in different parts of the same glacier. Some portions are in a state of compression from the hinder part moving more rapidly than that in front—others are in a state of tension from the part in front advancing more rapidly than that behind. Further, and most important, the central part of the glacier moves more rapidly than the sides; and if a series of points be laid out in a straight line on the surface, they will be rapidly bent into the form of a regular curve by the gradual increase of velocity in passing from the sides to the centre of the glacier. Further observations in subsequent seasons went far to prove directly the inference that the upper part of the glacier moves faster than that near to the bottom. These observations, confirmed by all subsequent examination, established the strange and unexpected conclusion that the ice of glaciers, hard and even brittle as it appears to be, is yet capable of being bent and moulded under the enormous pressure of its own weight—nay more, that its motion exactly conforms to that of an imperfect fluid. In his admirable *Travels through the Alps of Savoy*, Professor Forbes announced his new Theory of Glacier Motion in these words:—*A glacier is an imperfect fluid, or a viscous body, which is urged down slopes of a certain inclination by the mutual pressure of its parts.* The new theory was vigorously discussed, and led to exciting, even to angry, controversy; but its substantial correctness was more and more confirmed as new observations were made to test each disputed point. Whether or not it was true that a glacier could properly be called a viscous body, there was no denying the proposition more cautiously worded in Professor Forbes's "Sixth Letter on Glaciers"—*that the manner of movement of the surface of a glacier coincides with the manner of motion of a viscous or semifluid body.*

But though the law of glacier motion was thus conclusively established, the fact that such a substance as glacier ice is capable of conforming itself to such a law remained unexplained and anomalous. A younger labourer, approaching the subject by a different path, has been successful in clearing up the mystery. Professor Tyndall, in a lecture given at the Royal Institution in January, 1857, and in another delivered five weeks ago at the same place, has made some important additions to our knowledge of glaciers, and his explanation of the difficulty in question is equally simple and satisfactory. Faraday called attention some years ago to the fact, that two surfaces of ice at melting point will freeze together when placed in contact. This will happen in the sunshine, and even under hot water. Hence if ice be crushed or broken, and sufficient pressure applied to bring the surfaces of the separate fragments into contact, they will freeze together again into a perfectly solid mass. Ice, as Professor Tyndall has shown by experiment, can be forced into a mould and made to take what shape we please—not because it is an imperfect fluid like plaster of Paris, the particles of which move amongst themselves with little resistance—but because it possesses this peculiar quality of re-uniting by the contact of adjoining surfaces, after the resistance which it offers to breakage has been overcome. Here, then, is the property of ice which was wanting to explain its obedience to the law of glacier motion discovered by Forbes. Urged on by its own enormous weight, the glacier creeps forward, retarded at the sides and the bottom by the resistance of its rocky bed. Forced into new relative positions, its parts become separated by minute cracks, while at the same time other similar cracks are closed by the freezing together of surfaces now united by pressure. The law of its motion conforms to that of an imperfect fluid, and it is enabled to conform to that law by fracture and regelation.

Professor Forbes had used the terms *plasticity* and *viscosity* as nearly equivalent, applying them indifferently as descriptive

of the character of glaciers. Professor Tyndall, in his last lecture, has pointed out one essential point in which these two qualities of matter may be distinguished. A glacier may properly be described as a plastic mass, for it conforms itself to the shape of the valley through which it advances, and yields in every direction to pressure; but it cannot with correctness be called a viscous body, for the especial characteristic of viscosity is the adherence of the particles when drawn asunder; and it has been clearly shown that glaciers do not possess this quality, or, if at all, only in the slightest degree. The rents which are commonly seen near the edge of a glacier are caused by the inability of the glacier to accommodate itself to the slight strain caused by the central part moving onward more rapidly than the sides. It is true that there are parts of many glaciers which are without rents or *crevasses*, and yet where a differential motion exists, carrying one portion forward more rapidly than another. This would seem to argue some power of yielding to tension, but it will be a matter for further inquiry whether in such cases lateral pressure may not be at work to counteract the tendency of the glacier to split at right angles to the direction of tension.

If Professor Tyndall has in some points modified the language or the conclusions of his eminent predecessor, he has also brought some interesting facts to confirm the general accuracy of his law of glacier motion. Professor Forbes first taught us to regard a glacier as a slowly moving river, obeying tardily the laws of fluid motion. One of the most familiar of these is the fact, that at a bend of the stream the ~~most~~ rapid current lies on the side farthest from the point round which it flows. Exactly in the same way, where the glacier valley winds, forming on one side a concave hollow, the point of swiftest motion, which before was the centre of the glacier, is moved towards the concave side of the valley.

We have written at some length upon the motion of glaciers, because this is, after all, the most striking fact connected with them; and by the successive labours of the men whom we have named, it has been fully and satisfactorily explained. But these singular bodies present a variety of other phenomena not less remarkable in themselves, and which may long give occupation for the exertions of scientific inquirers. Far from being simple and uniform in composition, glaciers possess a highly complicated structure, and present a variety of appearances, each of which has been the object of observation and discussion. The most remarkable and the most characteristic of these phenomena is that which has been called the veined or ribboned structure of glacier ice. Strange and hardly credible as it now appears, this structure was scarcely noticed, and certainly not recognised as a general attribute of the ice of glaciers, until Professor Forbes called attention to it in 1841. His attempts to explain its origin, though highly ingenious, had scarcely met with general acceptance; but no other solution in the least satisfactory had been put forward until that of Professor Tyndall, first suggested by his colleague, Professor Huxley, which was published last year in the lecture to which we have already referred. The subject is, however, not yet free from doubt and difficulty, and further information is promised by the author of the new theory. We may hereafter present our readers with a summary of the discussion and its results, should Professor Tyndall have that success which we cordially desire in establishing law and order amongst the complicated and seemingly discordant phenomena of glacier structure.

We have understood that over-zealous friends of Professor Forbes have betrayed some symptoms of annoyance at the publication of new theories that go to modify the conclusions of that eminent man. On the other hand, the writer of an able article in the *Westminster Review*, struck by the importance and novelty of Professor Tyndall's views, somewhat overstated the amount of difference between them, and possibly appeared on that account to undervalue the labours of the older philosopher. We trust and believe that no shade of personal feeling has been experienced by either of the distinguished men whose names will be united in the history of science as the Interpreters of the Glaciers. Forbes laid broad and deep the solid foundation on which others have since worked. Professor Tyndall has added much, and bids fair to do still more. Yet past experience teaches us that he will leave much more to be accomplished by the man who in turn will succeed him. He is, we believe, too true a philosopher, too faithful a servant of nature, to repine whenever a new competitor outstrips him in the race which each successive generation is called on to maintain.

#### RISTORI'S ELIZABETH.

THE greatest of English Queens—we should say of English Monarchs—has preserved in history the loneliness which was the glory and the calamity of her life. The grandeur of her policy and the splendour of her reign have not effaced a few dark stains of blood from the memory of a woman whose life was an oblation to her country, and whose ambition was not unequal to the destiny of the nation she ruled and loved. Never was the haughty isolation of England more magnificently personified than it was by her Virgin Queen, and yet the annals of her brilliant era abandoned her to calumny and caricature. All the scandals that can assail a defenceless woman have been cast upon the fair fame of one who met the Armada with defiance, and sustained the liberties of Protestant Europe.

Even the homage of genius at the foot of her throne has not redeemed her reputation from disrespect, and the constant wisdom of her commanding intellect has not absolved the errors of her heart. Hannibal scaled the Alps only to become a theme for schoolboy declamation. Elizabeth consolidated the authority of England only to become a figure in a pantomime, or an object of sentimental interest to a playwright. Against these ignoble desecrations, however, the better judgment of our own days is beginning to assert its claims.

It was not to be expected that an Italian dramatist should treat Elizabeth with more respect than she has received from English historians and novelists. His business was simply to furnish a series of striking situations and effective contrasts—a few dramatic collisions worked up in a course of *tableaux* to a final death-scene, elaborated with all that hospital pathos which leaves the unlettered portion of the audience in doubt whether it be death or drink. This, we say, was the natural business of Signor Giacometti, who, we believe, enjoys some reputation in Italy as a writer of acting plays. That he has tolerably succeeded in the operation we are not indisposed to admit. He has read up and written down a vast amount of historical misinformation with laudable industry, if not with discrimination; and every incident that may or may not have occurred in the reign and life of Elizabeth—nay, all the tittle-tattle whispered in the *coulisses* of history (for history, like the drama, has its *coulisses*)—is served up in that strange production which is boldly entitled *Elizabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra*.

Whilst we cheerfully admit that the author of the play has made the most of the materials at his disposal, we are obliged to confess that the general effect upon an audience is a sense of indigestion. The lumbering and tedious prose in which the play is written is made doubly prosaic by a coarse profusion of quasi-historical erudition, and more than one scene has the peculiar liveliness of a compilation. As a dramatic composition, the play of *Elizabetta* is beneath notice. As a medium for the display of Madame Ristori's art, it is acceptable enough, notwithstanding the offensive folly of turning Bacon into a buffoon, and some other assaults upon our sympathies and understandings. At all events, Madame Ristori has no reason to complain of her dramatist. The great Italian *tragédienne* is almost always on the stage (in as many costumes as acts), and whenever she is on the stage, she fills it. The other characters are supernumeraries. Madame Ristori composes with infinite art the great historic figure of the Queen. The popular idea of Elizabeth has been an ugly and forbidding old woman, cased in an impenetrable frill. Ristori represents the royal sister of Mary Stuart as a woman of noble presence, and not without an exquisite charm of manner when she is in the mood to please. A rich mass of golden auburn hair crowns a well-cut and delicately-featured face with eyes that pierce the thoughts and fascinate the imagination, a strong-willed brow, thin transparent nostrils dilating with anger or emotion, a winning yet imperious mouth. The carriage and demeanour are full of grace and dignity. Such is the Elizabeth of the four acts which precede the death of Essex. In the fifth act we discover the wreck of the heart-broken woman and the shadow of the solitary Queen. The hair is matted and straggling in disorder, the eyes are sunken and glassy, the brow is contracted and worn with the ravages of sleepless passion, the cheeks are wasted and furrowed with consuming grief, the lips are colourless and drawn; and over the whole presence broods a forlorn desolation, broken only by fitful flashes of the old unyielding spirit and the old unconquerable will.

All these gradations of feeling and expression are expressed with unflinching power and subtlety by the actress. Her make-up in the last scene is startling, and the utter breakdown of the lifelong struggle of the heart, manifest in the shrill voice, the tottering walk, and the scrambling hands, is a spectacle that saddens and appals. The death is perhaps almost too "real" for true art, and the dignity of tragedy is a little compromised for the sake of effect. In the earlier scenes, where Elizabeth appears in all the glory of her intellect, and in all the fulness of her womanly charms, Madame Ristori's fine dramatic instinct is equally conspicuous. Observe her byplay as she listens to the recitation of Cranmer's soliloquy—again where she dictates the letter to Popham and the despatch to Leicester—where she examines the portrait of James—where she asks the Earl his opinion of her head-dress—where she offers her hand to Essex forgivingly, and betrays herself (*non me ne sono accorta*)—where she signs Mary's death-warrant, and equivocates with Essex about its execution. Again, in her interviews with James, and with the Spanish Ambassador—in the scenes with Lady Sarah, where jealousy is struggling with self-command—in the scene where she desires to save the life of Essex, and disdains to save it—and in the last act, where she dismisses the court, and abandons herself to despair—where she is surprised by James, who confronts her as she rises from the cushions—and, lastly, where she puts the crown upon his head and withdraws it again—in all these passages it is evident that the actress has studied the character as a whole, and that she does not reserve her strength for "points" only. A more striking example of what art can do with the most trashy materials has seldom been witnessed; and although she is indifferently supported by her company, we think Madame Ristori has wisely selected Signor Giacometti's *Elizabetta* for her benefit performance at Covent Garden next Monday.

## REVIEWS.

## GERMAN LITERATURE.

M. MÖLLHAUSEN'S *Journey from the Mississippi to the Shores of the Pacific*\* which has been long advertised, is at length before the public. Our readers will be aware that the venerable Alexander von Humboldt has taken great interest in this work, and that he wrote the introduction to it, which was circulated some time ago and was noticed by us about the end of last year. The book, which is in large quarto, consists of two volumes, and contains maps, plates, and other appendages. Three expeditions were sent out by the Government of the United States in 1853, to determine the most suitable line for a railway between the Atlantic seaboard and California. It was to the third, or southern expedition, commanded by Lieutenant Whipple, that the adventurous Prussian was attached. The starting point was the mouth of the Arkansas river, and the goal was San Pedro, on the coast of California. The whole distance traversed was 1892 English miles. Here is M. Möllhausen's description of the end of his journey:—

San Pedro, gentlemen, exclaimed our driver. We leapt eagerly from our seats and tumbled out of the carriage. Everything was in darkness, save that from an open door and several windows faint rays of light proceeded. Near us we heard a strange sound. It was the heavy fall of the sea, which was rolling in long measured waves upon the shore. We had reached the end of our wanderings.

M. Möllhausen is of course not quite so romantic a figure as

Stout Cortez, when with eager eyes  
He stared at the Pacific, and all his men  
Looked at each other with a wild surmise,  
Silent upon a peak in Darien.

Still this consummation was highly satisfactory both to the hardy travellers and to science.

A small but exceedingly learned and elaborate treatise on the law of divorce in the Protestant church,† which has lately appeared at Berlin, deals too much in quotations from authorities to whom neither our jurists nor theologians are likely to pay much attention, to be of any great utility or even interest in England. To any one who wishes, however, to go very deeply into the subject, it will be a convenient index.

The great and apparently insatiable interest which prevails in many minds with regard to the heroes of the Reformation, will probably secure some readers in England for the voluminous work which is now being published at Elberfeld, under the name "*Leben und ausgewählte Schriften der Väter und Begründer der Reformirten Kirche*."‡ It is edited by men of some mark, and has been honoured by the approbation of Dr. Nitzsch. The volume before us, the seventh, contains the life of Pietro Martire Vermigli, better known as Peter Martyr. His history, although not so full of incident as that of some of his contemporaries, has, from his connexion with Oxford and with the Anglican liturgy, a considerable interest for English Protestants. The whole series to which this book belongs will cost to subscribers only eight Prussian dollars. It will consist of eight goodly octavo volumes. Only a very considerable sale can reward the publisher for such an undertaking.

The author of *Hiob's Drei Freunde, Bunsen, Stahl, und Prälat Ritter*§ has thrown away a promising title upon a very poor pamphlet, in which the opinions of the Broad Church, High Lutheran, and Romanist doctors on the present state of German Protestantism are reviewed in an excited style. This kind of composition may relieve the mind of the writer, but can in no way tend to the edification of any other creature.

A very pretty new edition of Schwab's series of old German Popular and Fairy Tales|| is appearing in numbers at Stuttgart. The part before us includes *Hirlanda, Griseldis, Robert der Teufel*, and several others. The woodcuts, some of which are good, are by a Dresden artist.

A small manual of aesthetics,¶ by Unger of Göttingen, is hardly sufficiently popular for the general reader, but is well adapted for those who wish to go into what may be called "the thorough-bass of architecture, sculpture, and painting."

These are really the only German books at this moment upon our table which seem to call for any particular notice. In default of other works of interest we purpose to say a little of the very pleasant volumes of Madame Davésiés de Pontès,\*\* which have been looking reproachfully at us for two or three months. Their accomplished authoress has conceived the happy idea of introducing to the English reading public at large, as distinguished from the Philo-Teutonic portion of it, not only the

\* *Tagebuch einer Reise vom Mississippi nach den Küsten der Sudsee*. Von B. Möllhausen. Leipzig. London: Williams and Norgate. 1858.

† *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Ehescheidungsrechts in der Evangelischen Kirche*. Von L. Richter. Berlin. London: Williams and Norgate. 1858.

‡ *Leben und ausgewählte Schriften der Väter und Begründer der Reformirten Kirche*. VII. Theil. Elberfeld. London: Williams and Norgate. 1858.

§ *Hiob's Drei Freunde*. Hamburg. London: Williams and Norgate. 1858.

|| *Die Deutschen Volksbücher*. Zweite und Dritte Lieferung. Stuttgart. London: Williams and Norgate. 1858.

¶ *Die bildende Kunst*. Göttingen. London: Williams and Norgate. 1858.

\*\* *Poets and Poetry of Germany*. By Madame Davésiés de Pontès. London: Chapman and Hall. 1858.



*Dii majores* of Germany, but the earlier and less known poets who flourished in long succession from the earliest times down to the golden age of Goethe and Schiller. She begins with a chapter upon the mythology of the North—uncouth enough if we compare it to the dreams of Hellas, but still instinct with sublimity and truth. The old Scandinavian gods pass before us—Odin, and Thor, and Balder the Beautiful. Then comes a train of spirits, some quaint and some graceful—the Kobold and the Gnome from the recesses of the Erzgebirge, and the Neek from the Baltic shore. Next we have the stately female forms of which Tacitus tells us—the Velledas who inspired the author of the *Fechter von Ravenna*. The early epics are reviewed, and large specimens of translations in verse are mingled with the prose analyses of their contents. The *Nibelungen* and the *Guðrune* are noticed at great length; and we may direct the particular attention of our readers to Vol. i., pages 158 and 159, where they will find a version of a scene from Roswitha's *Abraham*, full of wisdom and of loveliness.

The Minnesingers follow next in order, from their first rude beginnings to the rare excellence of Gottfried of Strasburg. Then we are introduced to the Meistersingers, with their cheerful Sunday evenings and merry homely ways. A chapter is given to the rise of the drama; and some of the more ludicrous features of the Mysteries, and the legends connected with them bring us to the satiric period, which synchronized with the Reformation. The vast influence of Luther upon the German language was only slowly perceived, because the wars, which raged for a century after his death, down to the "ever-memorable and holy treaty," called away the attention of the most gifted from literary labours. Hans Sachs, with all his originality, was not the man to spread the dominion of German genius over neighbouring countries; and Opitz, Gryphius, and others of their class, were hardly better fitted to be the representatives of a great nation. The more delicate genius of Paul Fleming had charms only for Germans, and for Protestants; and the poets who flourished in the early part of the eighteenth century, were only of the third order. A popularity which seems strange to our contemporaries, was accorded to Gessner both in France and England; but it was Klopstock who laid the foundation of the world-wide fame of German intellect. Madame de Pontès begins her second volume with the life of the author of the *Messiah*; and sketches, in a series of well-written chapters, the history and works of Lessing, Wieland, Herder, Schubarth, Voss, Bürger, the group of Romantics, and the minor dramatists of the last century, with about a dozen other poets of the second class, such as Claudius, Körner, and Matthisson. Rapauch, who died in 1849, is the last writer of whom she speaks at any length.

At some future time she promises to give us a similar book upon the recent and contemporary poets of Germany. We shall be glad to welcome it, but we have doubts as to the propriety of adding to this projected work any particulars about Goethe and Schiller, not because a good deal does not remain to be said, but because Mr. Lewes and Mr. Carlyle have said all which the class addressed by Madame de Pontès cares to hear. We look for much good from the publication of these volumes. They will penetrate through the circulating libraries into circles which more systematic works have no chance of entering. Their tone is very healthy, and the numerous translations are at least sufficiently pleasing to do all that translations (except in very rare instances) can do—excite curiosity, and attract the attention of the reader to the original text. We wish some one would attempt for French literature, from the Revolution to the present time, what Madame de Pontès has done for Germany. The work of Julian Schmidt, to which we some time ago directed attention, might serve as a convenient groundwork. Any such book, however, would be of very inferior utility to the one before us. We may reasonably expect, from an extended acquaintance with the best productions of the German mind, results which cannot be expected from the study of French literature. A certain tinge of German thought is the very influence which is necessary for large classes of this country to whom classical education is becoming year by year less possible amidst the increased hurry and competition of life. This conviction is gradually spreading. We know instances of families in middle life, in some of the most remote districts of Great Britain, sending not only their sons, but their daughters to be educated in Germany. Madame de Pontès will help on a good work, and we thank her heartily.

#### THE PROVINCIAL LETTERS.\*

PASCAL'S *Provincial Letters* stand at the head of a class of literature which, since his time, has assumed gigantic proportions. He was the precursor of Junius in the eighteenth, and of the newspapers of the nineteenth century. One of his letters, on an average, would not fill much more than two columns of the *Times*; and the first eleven, upon which the fame of the book principally depends, might easily be contained in four sides of that paper. Whilst it undoubtedly owes something to the fact that it was first in the field, and much more to the enormous political and social importance which attached to it at the time of its appearance, there can be no doubt that the book is indebted for its position in French literature principally to its intrinsic

merit. We have selected it for notice, not in order to comment upon literary excellences universally admitted, but to draw attention to a side of the discussion that gives the Letters their principal interest, the importance of which can hardly be overrated, although it has been strangely neglected by most of Pascal's critics.

Though the earlier *Provincial Letters* (for it is to the first eleven that our remarks principally apply) contain several passages which jar on the feelings of an ordinary English reader, the first impression derived from them is, that of all the refutations ever written, they are the most triumphant and conclusive. The condition to which the Jesuits are there reduced can be compared to nothing but that to which Lord Macaulay reduced Mr. Robert Montgomery. With hardly any perceptible effort, but with a sort of incidental smiling ease, they are shown to be the advocates of theft, murder, calumny, gluttony, magic, and fraudulent bankruptcy. Their object, says their assailant, is to govern the world by pandering to its impatience of the severity of Christian morals, and they carry out their design so completely that they subvert in turn every Christian duty, civil, social, and religious. It is easy to imagine the transport with which such denunciations of an unpopular and most justly suspected body were received, and it would perhaps be difficult to overrate their political importance at the time of their publication. But to those who live in England in the nineteenth century, the Jesuits and their intrigues, have become almost as unsubstantial as Louis XIV. and his *lettres de cachet*; and after freely conceding that their teaching was most immoral, and that the triumph of their great antagonist was highly important to the best interests of society, it is impossible to deny that, on closer and cooler observation, the *Provincial Letters* do not appear so conclusive as they seemed at first, and that they raise several questions of vast importance to mankind at large, which are even now most imperfectly understood, and which deeply affect the daily conduct of our lives and the whole tone of our thoughts.

In order to understand the subject, it is necessary to take a short view of the opposition between the Jesuitical and the Jansenist systems of morals, and to show the mode in which each of them differed from that which has come by slow degrees to obtain almost universally—though it is rather assumed than expressed—throughout all the most civilized European nations, especially those which have embraced Protestantism. Between our own conception of morality and that which prevailed amongst both Jesuits and Jansenists two centuries ago, there is one broad and deep difference of principle, on which all subordinate differences depend. According to our modern view, Law and Morals are radically distinct from, and in a certain sense opposed to, each other. A law is a definite rule which may either be kept or broken, and which, if broken, involves certain distinct definite penalties; nor has it anything whatever to do with the question of wickedness. A man who never breaks the law at all may be much more wicked than one who breaks it often. A man who goes up to the very verge of breaking it—who stretches out his hand to steal, and only draws it back when the policeman passes—who draws the knife to stab, and is only restrained from using it by the grossest cowardice—is, in the eye of the law, on exactly the same footing as one who never felt a dishonest or murderous emotion. So, again, if a man steals from a dwelling-house to the value of 4*l.* 10*s.*, he incurs one penalty; if the property stolen is worth only one shilling more, the penalty is greatly increased, though the guilt remains the same. In the same way, a crime committed at five minutes past nine on a summer's evening, in broad daylight, is more heavily punished than a similar or more serious offence committed at half-past eight on a winter night. Every one feels instinctively—that the slightest knowledge of the subject shows—that such distinctions, immaterial and unsubstantial as they may appear, are absolutely necessary in all legal systems, because the want of definite rules on such subjects is a greater evil than a very large amount of individual hardship.

A feeling equally widespread and equally instinctive teaches us that in morality such strictness is neither possible nor desirable. We can construct legal definitions by which certain acts are qualified as murders; but these definitions are not only of no sort of assistance to us, but are positive hindrances when our object is to discuss the sin as distinguished from the crime—the moral guilt as distinguished from the legal character of the offence. The fact that, for a particular purpose, society chooses to apply the same epithet to three persons, one of whom treacherously poisons his friend, whilst a second unintentionally kills a constable who lawfully arrests him, and a third jumps into the Thames with her starving child in her arms, is only a source of confusion when we attempt to estimate the guilt of such conduct. Every one must feel that, though all three were equally murderers, their acts were very far indeed from being equally wicked, and even from bearing any kind of relation to each other. The notion of gauging moral guilt has indeed been long, and most happily, given up in Protestant countries. We can say that some things are wrong—that some are very wrong indeed, and some abominable; but we have no sort of measure by which we can compare the enormity of different sins, so as to say, for example, whether adultery is worse than burglary with violence, and how much or how many thefts are collectively as bad as a murder.

\* *Lettres Provinciales.* Par Blaise Pascal.

This, however, is a very modern conception. Two centuries ago, morality was considered to be subject to rules as precise as law itself; and indeed the two subjects can hardly be said to have been separated at that time. Law was almost universally regarded as something which had an independent existence, like the physical phenomena of gravitation, sound, and light; and morality was considered as a science hardly less complete and definite than arithmetic. One great source of this confusion was the practice of confession. The confessor had to allot so much penance for such an act. Of course the criminality of the act, and in many cases the question whether it was a mortal or a venial sin, depended upon an infinite number of surrounding circumstances of aggravation or extenuation. Hence a system gradually sprung up which had a surprising affinity to what is known to modern English lawyers as case law. If any one will read the Statute of Frauds, he will find that in certain kinds of contracts it is necessary that there should be a written memorandum of the agreement between the parties, signed by the party to be charged with it. This sounds simple enough; but the law reports supply many dozen rules as to what form of words is a sufficient memorandum, what is the precise meaning of the word "agreement," what is a sufficient signature, and so forth. No one who is at all familiar with such subjects can fail to be struck with the analogy between such rules and the cases of conscience decided by the Jesuits. It is easy to deride such things as mere subtleties and technicalities, but the variety of human conduct is so enormous, that any system, whether it apply to law or to morality, which is administered with any approach to strictness and accuracy, will inevitably produce a plentiful crop of them.

It follows from these considerations that Pascal's attack upon the Jesuits must either go a great deal further than its author intended it to go, or must be considered to apply at least as strongly to the Jansenists as to their opponents. It is easy to say that Pascal was in advance of his age, and that his book is levelled more or less unconsciously against any systematic conception of morality; but this assertion appears to us to be not only gratuitous, but demonstrably incorrect. It is impossible to read the *Pensées* without seeing that he was intensely attached to Jansenism in all its parts, and he frequently speaks with enthusiasm of the system of confession. He was, in fact, the partisan of a system of morality of the most rigid kind; and it is a little singular that it should not have been more frequently observed, that in the *Provincial Letters* he continually lays himself open to retorts as to the character of his own views, which it would have been very difficult to parry; and it may be added, that if, upon such a subject, any weight at all is to be attached to the logic of facts and of history, it is not less difficult to justify his views of morality than to justify those which he attacked. The morals of the Jesuits were unquestionably fantastic, dangerous, and dishonest, but the points which Pascal selected for attack were in all probability the most vulnerable that he could find; and with all their extravagance and dishonesty they unquestionably show a consciousness that a system of morality which absolutely condemns the whole existing state of society, and which would, if adopted, bind in iron chains all the energies and all the affections of mankind, stands self-refuted. In their anxiety to bring human life within the pale of salvation, the Jesuits no doubt stretched their system further than they had any right to stretch it; but if it is once granted (and at that time it was universally admitted) that morality is capable of being reduced to a system at all, the wish that there may be some sort of proportion between that system and the actual state of human society is one to which it is impossible to refuse a considerable degree of sympathy.

The ordinary illustrations of the Jesuits' morals are matter of notoriety, and are circulated principally by those who look upon Jesuits as *capita lupina* whom it is a sort of Christian duty to invest with every horrible attribute that can be imagined. We will give a few, which tend to show not so much the extravagances into which they ran, as the legal manner in which they speculated, and in which all persons must of necessity speculate who profess to decide upon the right and wrong of extreme cases in morality, and to administer a system of what is virtually criminal law in connexion with their speculations. Take, for example, the following. Escobar says—"Promises are not obligatory unless the promisor intends to bind himself when he makes them. This intention is not common unless they are confirmed by oath or contract; so that if a person says simply, 'I will do it,' he means, 'I will do it if I do not change my mind;' for he does not mean by what he says to deprive himself of his liberty." Nothing, of course, can sound more dishonest than this, and nothing could be more dishonest than to address such an admonition to a person who wished to evade an obligation. In such a case, the proper advice would of course be to fulfil the promise at the expense of any amount of suffering or loss; but this and similar passages occur not in sermons but in law books, and in judging of their morality the question is, not whether they would make a good impression on an ordinary or on an ill-disposed hearer, but whether there is any considerable class of cases to which they apply. Such a class there most undoubtedly is. Escobar's doctrine is no more than the legal maxim, *Ex nudo pacto non oritur actio*, applied to morals. If a man says to his servant, "Have my clothes brushed to-morrow at half-past six; I shall get up at that hour," it would be absurd to

say that he was bound in conscience to get up accordingly. If a person says to another, "I will give you 100*l.*," he would surely be at liberty to rescind his promise if he saw grounds of expediency for doing so, unless the person to whom it was made had done anything by way of consideration for it. If he had said, "I will give you 100*l.* to furnish such and such rooms, if you will take a lease of them"—and if the lease were taken, or if the promisee had ordered goods on the faith of a bare promise, and the promisor knew it—it would be highly dishonourable and wicked to retract, whatever might be the loss and inconvenience of fulfilling the engagement. It is, no doubt, easy to put cases in which this or any general rule would sanction unhandsome and even fraudulent conduct, but that is the disadvantage of all express general rules; and the general rule which Pascal's unqualified condemnation of Escobar implies, would be perfectly intolerable. Suppose it ran thus—"Promises are obligatory, although it was not the intention of the promisor to oblige himself when he made them; so that if a man says 'I will do it,' he debars himself from changing his mind, and leaves himself no liberty respecting it." If this were the general understanding of men, and the true interpretation of human language, all intercourse would become impossible. In a vast proportion of cases, a promise in form is meant, and is understood, as a mere intimation of present intention; and all systems of law agree in considering that, to be binding, a contract must be mutual. This obligation is of course enlarged in point of morality by an infinite number of considerations, which depend rather upon the individual conscience than upon any inflexible rule; but if we must have an inflexible rule at all, Escobar's (though it is expressed so loosely and imperfectly as to open a wide door to fraud) appears to us to be in principle better and truer than Pascal's.

It is impossible not to feel that Pascal not only misrepresents his antagonists by ignoring the essential conditions of the problem which, in common with them, he seems to have considered as soluble—the problem of framing a system of general rules by which the morality or the degree of immorality of any given action whatever may be determined—but that the extraordinary rigidity and harshness of his own system lay him under some difficulties from which they are exempt. For example, he is greatly scandalized at the following passage from Escobar:—"Is it permitted to eat and drink as much as we please (*tout son saoul*), without necessity and for mere pleasure? Certainly, according to Sanchez, if it does not hurt our health, for it is permitted to the natural appetite to enjoy the actions which belong to it." If this maxim is wrong, and if any systematic view of the subject can be taken, there would seem to be no possibility of stopping short of the principle that it is wrong to eat or drink as much as we like for mere pleasure and without necessity, and although it would not hurt our health to do so. A man eats half-a-dozen strawberries (being as much as he wants—*tout son saoul*) after dinner—is this a sin? If Escobar is wrong, it would seem that it is. Suppose the half-dozen become a dozen, two dozen, three dozen, or more, is it possible to draw any better line with regard to the lawfulness of the indulgence (considerations of selfishness and decency being out of the question), than that which Escobar actually does draw? When Mr. Atkinson travelled in Siberia, he came upon a wilderness full of wild raspberries. If he had had the requisite appetite and digestion, why might he not have eaten a cart-load of them, if he had no other way of passing his time? If the principle which Pascal appears to imply were the true one, no one would ever take a meal without sin; for even the prisoners in a gaol eat some part of their food merely because it pleases their palates. We might multiply illustrations of Pascal's views in this respect to almost any extent. It seems a fair inference from one passage of the book to suppose that he maintained that it was a duty to give in alms the whole of our superfluous property; and from another, that he considered all desire to rise in the social scale, even (as he expressly says) by legitimate modes, as being sins of ambition. In a third passage, he distinctly maintains that it is wrong to lend money at interest. Usury, he says, consists in receiving back more money than you lent. In fact, though we do not wish to defend the Jesuits, whose faults were no doubt both flagrant and enormous, we cannot deny that Pascal's views appear to us to lead logically to consequences hardly less fatal to human society than those which he attacks. The whole point and force of the *Provincial Letters* lies in the assumption that there is a grand unalterable code of morality which can be put into an express systematic form, according to which all actions must be regulated, and which the maxims of the Jesuits either evaded or overthrew.

The true answer to the book is, that the system which Pascal invested with these glorious attributes was in fact arbitrary, and in many respects false, and that if it had been strictly applied to the purpose to which Jansenists and Jesuits alike contended that systems of morality ought to be applied, it would have speedily reduced the world to a monastery or a wilderness. If it is admitted that it is a formal duty to give to the poor all superfluities, one of three results is inevitable—either the world must go on and prosper in and by wickedness; or it must be turned into a huge waste of listless sloth and beggary; or the word "superfluity" must be defined in such a manner as to avert this consequence. It is this evasion with which Pascal so bitterly reproaches the Jesuits. Certainly it would have been better to deny than to evade the obligation, but it was a less evil to evade



than it would have been to enforce it. Indeed, the evasion can hardly be called dishonest. All that the Jesuits said was, that whatever was necessary for the maintenance of a man's state and position in society according to his rank, was not part of his superfluities. From this, no doubt, they drew the consequence that few people had any superfluities; but the consequence and the principle stand on different grounds.

The passionate denial that morality has any sort of relation to expediency, is one which is frequently made; but it is hard to believe that it can have been entirely sincere in the case of a man of Pascal's depth and force of mind. We do not see how it would have been possible, upon his principle, to answer Mandeville's famous thesis, that private vices are public benefits. It has always seemed to us that the true answer is, that Mandeville's conception of virtue is totally false, and that under that name he describes nothing but a sort of pedantic pride, the prevalence of which would in effect be the greatest of public and private mischiefs; but from Pascal's view of life it would seem to follow, either that what he denounced as pride, avarice, ambition, and usury are good things, and that the virtue of alms-giving is a very questionable one, or else that Dahomey and Timbuctoo are in a holier condition than France and England. Indeed, the legitimate consequence of that contempt for the common interests of life, and that intense admiration for monasticism which pervaded Pascal's character, and which supplies the foundation of the *Provincial Letters*, is, that life is an evil, that the creation was a mistake, and that the seed of the woman has got the worst of its encounter with the serpent. The constancy with which this view of life presents itself to our notice as we read the *Provincial Letters*, greatly mars our admiration of that celebrated book. It is, in our opinion, far from being its author's greatest work; and we hope on some future occasion to take an opportunity of referring to the *Pensées*, which we consider to be entitled to that high distinction.

#### MERIVALE'S ROME UNDER THE EMPERORS.\*

MR. MERIVALE'S sixth volume completes the history of the Julian Cæsars, and commences that of their successors, the Flavian dynasty. To Roman apprehensions this change of the ruling family was in itself no mean revolution—so hard was it for contemporaries to believe that the sacred race of Anchises and Aphrodité could ever yield the reins of empire to a municipal family numbering few waxen images in its halls, and emerging from obscurity only a generation or two before it gave an emperor to the Roman world. Yet this is by no means the most important revolution recorded in the volume before us. At nearly one and the same moment—a few months only intervening between the two signal calamities—the great Temple of Rome and the great Temple of Jerusalem were laid in ashes. The shrine of Jupiter was indeed rebuilt; the white bull of Clitumnus was again slain on his altars; and the Pontiff, accompanied by silent Vestal, again ascended the stairs of the Capitol. Yet the fire which consumed the citadel in A.D. 70 obliterated almost the last vestige of the ancestral city of the Roman people, and completed the ruins of Nero's conflagration. Etruscan Rome survived only in a few narrow streets and a few of the humbler temples, and a Greek city stood in its place. By the conflagration on Mount Moriah, a more awful destiny was accomplished. A nation already ancient and illustrious in the days when Rome contended with Alba and Antium for the lordship of a few villages, was then scattered to the four winds. The Hebrew race indeed survives, while the Lucumons and Augurs of Etruria have long vanished. Yet it may be doubted which of these sacerdotal races has suffered the severer doom—that which oblivion has covered as with a mantle, or that which intolerance so long singled out for its prey. And from under the shadow of both the Temple of Jupiter and the Temple of Jehovah was silently but rapidly emerging a religion that, whether its effects on morals or civilization be considered, was destined to produce a mightier change on mankind than had yet been recorded in the annals of four thousand years. It was a change which, directly and indirectly, subverted or reversed the ancient order of things—broke down the partition walls between Greek and barbarian—exchanged for the isolation of ancient communities the comprehensive genius of Christianity—and enfolded in its capacious arms the philosophy of Athens and Alexandria, the laws and the majesty of Rome, the fierce hierarchies of the Gaulish and British Celts, and the grosser superstitions of Apis and Astarte, of Egypt and Syria.

With such a theme, treated with the author's well-known learning and ability, it is scarcely necessary to add that this volume is one of unusual interest. The interest, indeed, is derived rather from the events and mutations which it delineates than from the personal characters of the actors in them. If society was making, unconsciously to itself, mighty evolutions, its apparent leaders were seldom above, and frequently below the average either in worth or abilities. Mr. Merivale, in his former volumes, invested the earlier Cæsars with an interest lawfully theirs. Setting aside the mighty Julius and the politic Augustus, we were constrained to admire the administrative talents of Tiberius and the misdirected industry of Caligula. Some pity, also, was due to Claudius, since his virtues and his scholarship were his own, while his follies or vices were the

effects of disease or evil counsellors and companions. But it is impossible to find in Nero a single merit. He was not even a third-rate singer—he was a wretched poet—he was a bungling charioteer. And he had no business, even had he excelled in them, with any of these accomplishments. If we turn from his accomplishments to his legitimate employments, he was a monster without one redeeming virtue. He was equally dangerous whether he loved or hated. He banished his friends, put to death his favourite wife, and sent his tutor and "flapper," or right-hand man in all scrapes, out of the world. These, however, may be looked upon as venial or even useful crimes, since, whatever may be thought of Seneca, no jury could have hesitated about banishing Otho, or at least imprisoning for life Poppæa and Agrippina. But even in his better days—his celebrated quinquennium—Nero was a gross voluptuary and a foolish dilettante; and as his character, or rather his animal instincts, assumed a deeper hue of depravity, he becomes the object of unmixed hatred and contempt. We despise the imperial Bathyllus—we loathe the murderer of his brother, wife, and mother. We marvel at the servility of the times that endured and even applauded him; and although savage and desolating wars, with all their painful family of crime, rapine, and disorder, immediately followed his death, we feel that no sacrifice could be too great which rid the world of Nero's presence.

The courtiers and councillors of the last Julian Cæsar—and he it observed, for the honour of a noble house, that he belonged to it only by the slenderest of filaments, being really a scion of one of the most ruffianly families in Rome, the red-bearded Domitii—were, with very few exceptions, worthy of such a master, cowardly, effeminate, and depraved. Yet, beyond the precincts of the Court, we encounter soldiers and statesmen worthy of the better ages of the Republic, and showing, both in their lives and in their deaths, that the ancient spirit was not wholly dead. While Rome retained among her prætors and proconsuls such men as Galba, Vindex, Virginius, and Corbulo, she continued to sit rightfully as a queen over the nations. We must refer to Mr. Merivale's well-sketches portraits of these genuine worthies; and perhaps had Seneca and Burrhus been further removed from their hopeful pupil, they too might have been accounted men of the antique stamp. Indeed, it was no easy matter to be virtuous among the cakes and ale of such a Court; and the imperial master of the horse and the grand chamberlain might, had annuities been then in fashion, have driven a good bargain with the insurance offices on the score of their extremely precarious lives. So soundly practical, indeed, was Roman discipline, both in civil and military affairs, that even voluptuaries like Otho became, when relegated to the provinces, sage, frugal, nay, popular governors. If Rome alone, at this epoch, be kept before our eyes, it is incredible that her empire could have endured twelve-months—so utterly corrupted were both head and heart, both crown and sole of her inhabitants, from those who sat in curule chairs or commanded the prætorian janissaries, to those who ate pulse in the suburbia or applauded Nero in the theatre. But out of this unhallowed circle healthy life-blood circulated through the empire; nor, until more than two centuries after the last of the Julian Cæsars had fallen by his own hand, does it seem imperative for the barbarians to descend from the Alps and repair the exhausted forces of Italy and its capital.

In none of Mr. Merivale's pages is this lingering virtue more conspicuous than in those which portray the loyalty of the military chiefs to the Cæsarian House. By an arrangement implying the confidence of the prince in all orders of his subjects, and also rendered possible by the natural defences of Italy against external invasion, the peninsula itself was very imperfectly guarded by soldiers. For, as compared with the great masses of the legionaries on the frontiers, the prætorians were few in number, and, in respect of discipline and hardihood, were but carpet-knights. It was not exactly that "the Tenth don't fight," but when it came to the proof, the body-guards, in comparison with the line, cut but a poor figure in the toils of a march or the privations of country quarters. Hence the proconsul or general on the Parthian or German frontier, when "a mere vice or out-purse of the empire" sat on the throne, was master of the position, and, as it so often turned out a century afterwards, had but to throw up his cap and point to his purse to be proclaimed *Imperator*, and installed at Rome. Yet until Nero by his crimes and his buffooneries had fairly worn out the patience of every brave and honest man, not a hand was raised against him, and his most loyal and effective servants were precisely the men who might, had they not been conscientious, have deposed him. From the contemplation of Galba and other soldier-nobles of the time, Mr. Merivale regards them as the finest class of Roman citizens:—

The men who governed the provinces, nobles by birth, senators in rank, judges and administrators as well as captains by office, represent the highest and largest training of the Roman character; for they combined a wide experience of men and affairs with the feelings of a high-born aristocracy and the education of polished gentlemen. Long removed from daily intercourse with their more frivolous peers in the city, they escaped for the most part contamination with the worst elements of society at home; they retained some of the purity, together with the vigour of the heroes of the republic; they preserved, in an era of ideologues or sensualists, the strength of character and manly principle which had laid the deep foundations of the Roman empire. They were conquerors, but they were also organizers; and so far, with respect at least to subjects of inferior race, they deserve to be reputed civilisers. They impressed on the minds of the Orientals a fear, upon that of the Occidentals an admiration, of Rome, which taught them first to acquiesce in the yoke, and afterwards to glory in it.

\* *A History of the Romans under the Empire*. By Charles Merivale, B.D. Vol. VI. London: Longmans, 1858.

These were the representatives of her moral power of whom Rome should have made her idols, alike for the glory of their exploits, and the influence of their will and character, not the Claudii and Domitii, whom the chance of family adoption had raised to the lip-worship of courtiers and time-servers. We are tempted to gaze again and again, in the decline and decay before us, on the legitimate succession of true Roman nobility, to renew our admiration of its sense of duty, its devotion to principles of obedience and self-control, unshaken by the evils of the schools, serving the Emperor as the genius of discipline, worshipping all the gods after the custom of antiquity, but trusting no god but its country.

The opening chapter of this volume relates to the affairs of Britain, and is accordingly of more than ordinary interest to the people whose empire, for its extent and importance, alone presents an image of that of Caesarian Rome. For the complete subjugation of the island we must await the narrative of the reign of Domitian; yet we cannot forbear adverting now to the subject generally. Roman civilization in this island remains—and, unless new and unexpected materials for better knowledge turn up, seems likely to remain—an insoluble enigma. That it was pervasive we cannot doubt. Its monuments attest that from the moors of Cornwall to the foot of the Grampians the iron heel of the conqueror was deeply impressed on our soil. We do not insist on another and even a more living impress of Roman power—the transfusion into our speech of so much of her written or spoken language. That came through other and later channels. But from the brick and marble she has left behind in our island, the boulder stones of the imperial stream, we see that both city and country were penetrated and appropriated by Rome, and that she brought the “divided Britons” within the verge of her laws and arts, her luxuries and vices. That the valour and beauty of the British race were in high request in the capital of the civilized world, we are assured as well by her lighter as her graver literature. Martial applauds the charms of her daughters, and Tacitus the courage of her sons. Yet when, in the fifth century of the Christian era, the rear-guard of the legions retired finally from our shores, this civilization, pervading and massive as it appears, suddenly vanished, and left scarcely a track behind. A province which for more than two centuries had recruited the armies of Rome—which bristled with colonies and walled towns, was radiated by massive roads, and adorned with luxurious villas—sank, almost without a blow, hopelessly and helplessly, according to all accounts, into the arms of naked and unlettered barbarians. The influence of Rome on Britain seems to have been nearly as evanescent as it was on the outposts of the empire, on Trajan’s conquests in Arabia, on the Roman province south of Syene, or the earlier acquisitions of the Caesars beyond the Weser and the Elbe.

In another respect, Mr. Merivale’s account of the Roman campaigns in Britain is of deep interest at the present hour. While reading of this island as it was in the first century, it is impossible not to be reminded of India in the nineteenth. Many sentences from Tacitus’s account of the British rebellion in A.D. 60 might be transferred, with few changes or modifications, to the columns which daily treat of the revolt of Oude and Rohileund. The profound dissimulation of the subjects of either empire, the undulations of a great conspiracy against the rulers, the unexpected bursts of rebellion in quarters where peace, or at least subjection, had long been taken for granted, the supineness of some prefects, the atrocities which marked the insurrection, the alarm which reached even the seat of Government—all read like a rehearsal of the hideous drama recently displayed before our eyes, and which even now perhaps awaits its final act. Two features of difference may indeed be noted. First, the Romans provoked, if Tacitus be a correct reporter, in many cases the wrath and retaliation of their British subjects and allies—they added insult to rigour. “Britanni delectum ac tributa et injuncta imperii numera impigre obeunt, si injuriæ absint; has ægre tolerant, jam domiti, ut pareant, nondum, ut servant.” A contrary error may be imputed to ourselves; but secondly—and here the advantage is on the side of Rome—we do not find that at any critical moment of the British mutiny either the Senate or the Emperor busied themselves with legislating for a province which they so insecurely held, or committed to an untried board of *decemviri* or *centumviri*, unacquainted with the provincials and remote from the scene of action, the administration of a country they had yet to win. It was time enough, thought both the Cæsar and the Senate, for the gown to step in when the sword had performed its work.

Again, the present volume affords striking proofs of the inherent vigour of the Roman empire even when torn asunder by civil strife. Before the death of Nero, two provinces, each of them nearly equal in extent to two of the largest European kingdoms, raised the standard of revolt against the parricidal buffoon whose crimes and follies alike disgraced the majesty of the Roman people. Gaul and Spain proclaimed, by the voices of eighty thousand men “armed in complete steel,” that the son of Agrippina should no longer be their master. The commander of the Spanish legions became for a few months emperor; but scarcely had he expiated his ambition by his blood, when no less than three competitors started up at once for the vacant throne. Again, and not for the last time, the peninsula of Italy was the arena of civil war. The East was banded against the West. During an agony of eighteen months, Italy endured all the woes she had sustained two centuries earlier, from the pillage of Spartacus or the regular warfare of Sulla—some of her fairest cities were laid in ashes, and the seat of empire itself was taken by storm. And yet Vespasian’s throne was as secure as that of Tiberius. Within a few weeks after his entry into Rome, the voice of law was heard in the forum; the plough-share was drawing furrows over the battle-field; the great Pax Romana again brooded serenely over the world. Nor were the provinces or Italy again seriously convulsed until the follies of Commodus and the weakness of his successors again left the election of an emperor to the arbitrement of strong battalions.

Mr. Merivale loses no occasion of pointing out to his readers wherein lay the secret strength, we might almost say the charmed life, of the Roman Empire. The personal character of the Caesars was a lucky or an unlucky accident. He might be the servant or the master of the legions—the indulgent or the despotic chief of the senate. But neither in the senatorian nor the imperial power, neither in the glittering files of the body-guard nor in the denser masses of the legions, lay the abiding strength of the empire. The foundations of that strength were of deeper root, of more ancient date and of nobler origin, since they rested on the principles and maxims which the deceased commonwealth had transmitted. The superstructure was the work of Julius or Augustus, but the basement and the corner-stones were laid by the Valerii, the Camilli, and the Fabricii—by the great lords of the comitia of centuries, by the equally great leaders of the assembly of the tribes. To the eyes of the philosopher, the Roman empire is one of the fairest monuments ever erected to the memory of constitutional freedom. It resisted for centuries outward violence and inward decay, not because it was an imperial, but because it was a popular creation—because the first Caesars had demolished little more than oligarchical excrescences, while they retained or revived, under new forms, the balance of the consular, senatorian, and popular functions. The majesty of the law transcended that of the Caesars. The exorbitances of Caligula and Nero prevailed for a season only; nor, until Oriental despotism supplanted the authentic principate of Rome was the Senate thoroughly degraded, or the army entirely forgetful of its duties and relations to the State.

Yet although Mr. Merivale has still a long interval to bridge over before he reaches the terminus of his work, already the symptoms of decline, if not of decay, are visible in the features of the empire. The national virtues of Rome are becoming less apparent. Her great men are with Corbulo and Virginus on the frontiers—her better Caesars henceforward will spring from municipal or provincial towns. Rome has lost her breed of noble blood—Italy will soon forego her peculiar privileges. Gaul, Spain and Illyricum will replenish the senate. Cæsar’s magnificent idea of recruiting the seat of empire with barbaric blood is being swiftly realized. The stream of life is setting towards the heart of the empire, instead of welling from it. The *Fasti Consulares* show that the senate, no less than the *Domus Palatina*, is growing provincial. After Augustus, Rome’s greatest emperor will be an Iberian pensant. Even her literature is no longer of home growth. Her orators, poets, and philosophers will come from the banks of the Bœtis—from that very land whose Corduban poets the Luculli and Metelli of the republic had pensioned and laughed at.

The process of this transmutation will be traced in the historian’s concluding volumes. We have left ourselves no room to commend as it deserves his recent one. But Mr. Merivale’s reputation as a learned, faithful, and picturesque chronicler needs not any support from us; and it will have been enough to have lifted even a corner of the curtain to induce the reader to contemplate for himself the scene which the historian has so amply and ably delineated.

#### MANON LESCAUT.\*

TO say that the writers of French fiction are always fluctuating between realism and sentimentalism is only to say of them what is equally true of English novelists. But there is a thoroughness in French writing which there is not in English; and their realism seems more real, and their sentimentalism more sentimental than ours. They describe things and persons which we taboo, and justify themselves by saying that they do but paint what exists. On the other hand, they rise to heights of fancy and rhetoric, go back to first principles, and claim an intimacy with the *Bon Dieu* on which we should not venture. A hundred years ago, there was the Abbé Prevost to represent the realism, and Rousseau the sentimentalism, exactly as Balzac and George Sand represent them in our own time. The difference, however, which a century has made in the respective types is very considerable, and it is worth while to know what the realism of France was a century back, in order that we may compare it with its modern counterpart. We cannot say that the comparison is entirely in favour of the later generation. *Manon Lescaut*, the only one of the very numerous productions of the Abbé Prevost which has survived, has been the model of a conspicuous class of French novels, and more especially of the *Dame aux Camellias*. But although M. Alexandre Dumas fils has copied closely the main features of his original, there is the widest possible interval between the execution of the two works. The Abbé Prevost, although he treats of courtesans and rogues, is always a gentleman. There is not the slightest approach to voluptuous materialism in *Manon*

\* *Histoire de Manon Lescaut et du Chevalier Des Grieux*. Par l’Abbé Prevost. Nouvelle Edition. Paris. London: Jelfs. 1856.



*Lescaut*; and we are sure that the author would have thought himself disgraced by the minute nastiness of his successor.

The Abbé Prévost was born in 1697, at Hesdin, in Artois, of a family of some distinction. He was educated by the Jesuits of his native town, and thence proceeded to complete his studies at the Collège d'Harcourt, at Paris. He was very highly thought of, and the Jesuits had already persuaded him to enter the novitiate, when one day, at the age of sixteen, he suddenly abandoned his sacred calling, and enlisted in the army. The wars of Louis XIV. were almost at an end, but he hoped to find some chance of distinguishing himself. His hopes were disappointed, and he returned to the Jesuits, who eagerly welcomed him back. Once more, however, the attractions of an active life prevailed, and he again entered the army, and seems to have received some promotion, though the exact grade to which he attained is not known. The nature and end of his secular career may be sketched in his own words. "Some years passed," he tells us, "while I followed the profession of arms. I was, I will own, lively and open to the influences of pleasure; in the words of M. de Cambrai, 'la sagesse demandait bien des précautions qui m'échappèrent.' I leave my readers to judge what, at the age of twenty to twenty-five, must have been the heart and feelings of a man who wrote *Cleveland* at thirty-five or thirty-six. The unhappy ending of a too tender engagement at last led me to the tomb; this is the name I give to the respectable order where I buried myself, and where I remained for some time so far dead that my nearest relations did not know what had become of me." This respectable order, which he entered at the age of twenty-four, was that of the Benedictines of the congregation of St. Maur. He remained for six years sedulously engaged in the exercises of religion, and devoting himself to the most laborious study. He tried hard to fall into the spirit of the congregation among which he lived, and to banish the thought of the outer world which he had loved so keenly, and had quitted rather in a moment of temporary disgust than from any profound conviction. His order employed him in different capacities, in order to occupy and tranquillize him. He was a diligent historian of Christian antiquity, a successful controversialist, and a popular preacher. But it would not do; and his heart was really elsewhere. Relying, it is said, on a Papal dispensation which an intrigue withheld from him, he left the convent; and then, alarmed at the consequences of the step, he fled into Holland. He spent six years in exile, partly in Holland and partly in England, and it was at this period of his life that most of his novels were written. The *Memoirs of a Man of Quality* was the first and the chief of these, and *Manon* is really an episode in these *Memoirs*, although it was published separately a few years later. At length, in 1734, the Abbé received permission to return to France as a secular priest, and for thirty years he continued to reside in Paris as one of the hardest working *littérateurs* of the day. Like Goldsmith, he was ready to do whatever the booksellers set him, and he worked away with indifference whether he was ordered to write a History of William the Conqueror, a History of Celebrated Voyages, or a translation of Richardson, Hume, or Middleton's *Cicero*. It is said that he allowed his bookseller to make rather too good a thing of him, for his habits were so simple and his life so retired that he was indifferent to more than the necessities of life. He had just established himself in a cottage near Chantilly, which he intended as a retreat for his old age, when he was seized, while walking in the forest, with a fit of apoplexy. He was thought to be dead, and a village surgeon considering him an interesting subject, began opening the body. The shock recalled him to consciousness, and he expired in the most horrible agony. It deserves to be recorded, that in his pocket was found a paper containing the sketch of three moral and religious works, to writing which he purposed to devote the remainder of his life.

*Manon Lescaut* is so great a favourite with the French public, that new editions are constantly being published, and they are almost all preceded by biographies of the author. There is much reason in this, for the life of the Abbé Prévost throws great light on the story which has made his name famous. From his life we gather the idea of a man of strong feeling, of tenderness, of an excited and passionate character, of little fixity of purpose, but still with a sincere desire not to suffer himself to be corrupted—controlling himself in his better moments, and disgusted by the coarser side of worldly pleasure, while fascinated by its more brilliant aspect. Above all, we apprehend him to have had something simple, genuine, and almost childish in his composition. *Manon* bears the traces of such a character. Its *naïveté*, its natural ease, its intensity of passion carry us through scenes, and familiarize us with persons, that would have been repulsive if treated by a man of vulgar sensuality. There is no morbidness, no apology for taking up such a subject, no wish to heighten or to disguise. The tale is told because to the author's mind it seems true, and because his readers will like to have it told. It begins at once, and rushes in *medias res* at the very opening. The first pages inform us how the Chevalier Des Grieux at seventeen met Manon at sixteen, how he saw her getting out of the coach at Amiens, and how instantly he fell in love with her. Thenceforward the story rolls on, and the history of the unhappy couple is pursued with that artless art which carries us forward, because only those things happen that seem inevitable. Manon is the most tender of mistresses until poverty threatens to knock at

the door, and then she flies to a richer lover. But the Chevalier is too deeply attached to care about inconstancy, and waits patiently till his mistress returns to him. Friends and relations try to reclaim him, but in vain. He will do anything to stay near his Manon. He turns rogue, he cheats at cards, he lives by joining a combination of sharpers; and however often his mistress leaves him, he is overjoyed when she condescends to come back. He even joins with her in trying to plunder one of her rich admirers, and both are thrown into prison. At last she is condemned to be sent to America as a *filie perdue*; but he will not be shaken off, and accompanies her to New Orleans. Fresh intrigues threaten to break up their intercourse, when he carries her off with him into the wilderness, trodden only by the Indians, and there she dies in his arms. He is rescued by a friend, named Tiberge, who has never ceased to help him, although lamenting deeply the course of his long infatuation. The Chevalier returns to Europe, and then tells his story to a stranger, who had had an opportunity of showing him an accidental kindness; and so, without a word of reflection or sentiment, without any ending but what such a story would have in real life, ends a tale that is certainly one of the most remarkable creations of the French genius in the eighteenth century.

Some of the French critics have pronounced that the Abbé Prévost wrote *Manon Lescaut* by a happy accident. In his other tales the ease of narration becomes mere prolixity, and the passionate tenderness fades into a group of ordinary intrigues. And in *Manon Lescaut*, as in the productions of other novelists of that time—of Le Sage and Fielding—we scarcely feel the excellence of the work as we read it. The story is told so straightforwardly, that we are neither invited nor permitted to analyse the pleasure it gives us. But when we look back we find that Manon and the Chevalier have been strangely interesting, and the lucky accident really consisted in the author either remembering or inventing the two characters. The former is the more probable, and it is impossible not to suspect that in Manon we have a reminiscence of the engagement *trop tendre* of the Abbé's youth. This woman, with her true attachment to and honest admiration of her lover, her unaffected determination not to be poor, her avowed hankering after the superfluities of life, her delight in tricking the rich fools she preys on, and her merriment when she gets her Chevalier to play this roguish game with her, is so life-like that she overcomes us with her reality, and claims something of the indulgence which we extend to a living person. The Chevalier again has a kind of gentlemanly melancholy about him which becomes a man of that quality, and makes us think twice before we damn him. He offends against every standard of judgment. His infatuated love is an insult to strict principle. He flies in the teeth of worldly wisdom by his invariable readiness to take a woman back who has deceived and left him. He violates common honesty in order that he may protract his guilty career. But so well is the unity of his character preserved, that all these offences seem natural. They are but steps in a career, which, looked at as a whole, excites pity and sympathy quite as much as disapprobation.

The Abbé, in a preface to his story, expresses a hope that *Manon Lescaut* may be found moral and edifying, because it shows the great misery into which illicit love brings those who entertain it. This sort of moral is not generally found, we believe, to be very efficacious. In the first place, the loss of future worldly prosperity has extremely slight weight with the class of persons that are capable of imitating the conduct of the Chevalier Des Grieux; and secondly, the misfortunes of the Chevalier are greater than come within the average experience of his imitators. The moral of the book, so far as it has any moral, lies at once in its reality and its reserve. If we assume that life as it is should be, within certain limits of decency, the theme of the novelist, there is much reason for saying that so very large and important a part of actual life as that occupied by illicit love cannot be overlooked. Who ought to write on this subject—and still more, who ought to read what is written—is a different matter. But taking it for granted that the theme ought to be handled for some readers, then the question of morality only arises as to the execution of the task, and it is possible that the execution may be moral; and it will be all the more likely to be so if it is free from moralizing. In this sense *Manon Lescaut* may be called a moral book. The object of such literature is to be real; and *Manon Lescaut* is eminently real. There is no idealizing vice, no confusing one kind of passion with another, no hesitation in painting the degradation of character that ensues. And if the book is realistic, the realism consists in the acceptance of consequences, and in the fidelity to a conception of character. There is none of that loathsome realism which has gone to such prodigious lengths in modern French novels, and which describes everything that the modesty of all, except the publicly immodest, would keep concealed. It argues the most singular deprivation of taste that such things can be tolerated. It is quite true that prudery begets prurience, and that when the public discussion of illicit love is too rigidly excluded from literature, we have hankerings after it appearing in the most curious way. Mr. Albert Smith, for instance, introduced in his last "Mont Blanc" a young lady, who expressed, with a sly look, a great wish to go to the "naughty opera," and the applause and laughter of the audience amply justified him. But what could

be more singular, if we reflect on it, than that an ordinary goodish girl should find food for mirth and playful allusion in the sin and sorrows of the *Traviata*? But all this is the justification of treating the subject as it ought to be treated, and as it is treated in *Manon Lescaut*—with fidelity, with frankness, without sermonizing, but with a largeness that looks to the whole of life, and an abhorrence of the brutality that unveils the *minutia* of an intrigue. It is not the justification of treating it as it is treated by the younger Dumas and by Théophile Gautier.

## LA TRIBUNE MODERNE.

## Second Notice.

WHEN the fall of Napoleon removed the leaden weight which had for years pressed down the intellect of France, Chateaubriand had well earned, by his steady protest against triumphant despotism, the right to express the national indignation against the defeated tyrant. During the hopeless campaign of 1814, he was engaged in preparing the manifesto of constitutional Royalism, which was published on the 30th of March, under the title of *Bonaparte and the Bourbons*. Louis XVIII., who was no friend to the author, declared that the pamphlet was worth an army to the Legitimate cause, and although many of the arguments are fallacious, and the remainder have long since become hackneyed, the wonderful effect which it produced on general opinion may still be understood. Once more, as in the case of the *Genius of Christianity*, Chateaubriand had launched himself on the height of the tide, and uttered at the right moment with a sagacious eloquence, what all men would adopt as their own thought on the morrow. It is difficult to imagine the eager curiosity of an intelligent nation which for many years had been not only debarred from hearing the truth, but condemned to the single form of falsehood which consists in monotonous adulation. The worship of Napoleon, which was afterwards cultivated by Béranger and Thiers, was a delusion of later growth, for few sovereigns have ever earned the general detestation which attended the last days of the Empire. The mythology, however, of the system was the only history with which the existing generation had been allowed to become familiar; and the great writer who showed that France might be great and happy without Napoleon was welcomed as the prophet of a new revelation. The nation was sick of war and of the murderous conscriptions which it involved. Even the chiefs of the army had become weary of incessantly staking their wealth and honours on repeated casts of the dice; and all classes were rejoiced to find that their various interests and resentments were but the promptings of an enlightened patriotism. The diplomatic merit of negotiating the first Restoration with Europe may belong to Talleyrand, but Chateaubriand did more than any contemporary politician to render the ancient dynasty acceptable to the country. Yet his own royalism, though it was afterwards consistently maintained to the close of his life, was of comparatively recent date. He had served the First Consul, and but for the murder of the Duke of Enghien, he would not have hesitated to accept promotion from the Emperor. It was only when experience had proved that a military usurper necessarily degenerated into a tyrant, that he saw in the principle of legitimacy the best security for the establishment of regulated constitutional freedom.

Chateaubriand was, however, too great a master of political controversy to confine his efforts to the argumentative recommendation of the cause which he supported. In his celebrated pamphlet he appealed to the instincts and prejudices of his countrymen as well as to their reason—inviting them to repudiate the power which lay prostrate, and finding a new object for their sentiments or phrases of personal devotion, which had long been desecrated in the service of Napoleon. Englishmen were in those days sufficiently familiar with every term of abuse which could be heaped on the "Corsican usurper," but the denunciation of the recently-worshipped Emperor as an intrusive foreigner was so novel and startling in France, that it might almost be mistaken for an act of courage. Chateaubriand afterwards regretted that he had described the object of his invective as a general only of the second order; but in tracing out the blunders and the consistent selfishness of the Imperial career, he displayed the sagacity which belongs to personal antipathy. The attempt to idealize the Bourbons as the centre of an overflowing and universal enthusiasm, seems at the present day to be still bolder, but it was justified by success. France was half persuaded that a quarter of a century had passed in gloomy widowhood, and that 1814 was the natural sequel of 1789. The Count of Artois was recognised as the model of chivalry; the King, with more justice, was accepted as the type of benevolent wisdom; and the stiff Duchess of Angoulême was lavishly endowed with all the virtues which her sufferings and associations might have developed in a less contracted nature. In one of his numerous writings of the period, Chateaubriand records the gracious language of Louis XVIII. to the Marshals—who instead of standing, as in the days of the tyrant, were comfortably seated at the Royal table. "I hope," said the King, "that I shall have no occasion to call for your assistance; but if the case occurs, genty as I am, you will find me in the midst of you." The illustrious warriors, as the narrator proceeds to state, were indescribably touched; and they all resolved to shed the last drop of their blood for a monarch so

truly French. A few months later their fidelity was subjected to a practical test; and yet it is not impossible that the anecdote may be substantially true. A still odder illustration of the popular language of 1814 is furnished by Chateaubriand's grateful reference to the English nation and General:—

Et quel Français aussi pourrait oublier ce qu'il doit au Prince Régent d'Angleterre, au noble peuple qui a tant contribué à nous affranchir? Les drapeaux d'Elizabeth flottaient dans les armées de Henri IV., ils repaissaient dans les bataillons qui nous rendent Louis XVIII. Nous sommes trop sensibles à la gloire pour ne pas admirer ce Lord Wellington, qui retrace d'une manière si frappante les vertus et les talents de notre Turenne. . . . au lieu d'un roi de France captif, le nouveau Prince Noir ramène à Bourdeaux un roi de France délivré.

It is true that the new Black Prince, though he had been victorious at more than one Cressy, had not in 1814 incurred the hatred of the French people by his Poitiers at Waterloo. The resentment, which is perhaps not yet extinct, forms a striking exception to the happy and characteristic versatility of the nation.

The royal vice of ingratitude is principally displayed at the expense of men of genius who have devoted their energies to the exaltation of the Crown. Kings are naturally unwilling to occupy the position of clients, and Chateaubriand was too original, too exacting, and too vain to become a successful courtier. Louis XVIII. disliked a busy supporter of legitimacy, and Charles X., before and after his accession, suspected a firm adherent of the Charter who sometimes forgot to keep up the character of a dutiful son of the Church. At Ghent, Chateaubriand bore the empty title of Minister of the Interior, but he necessarily retired from office when, on the second Restoration, Fouché received the stipulated reward of his ingeniously-complicated treason. As a Viscount and member of the Chamber of Peers, the zealous champion of monarchy soon became an active leader of the Royalist Opposition; but he never attained the art of extemporaneous oratory, and the speeches which he occasionally read were far less effective than the pamphlets and newspaper articles with which he directed the efforts of his party. The first Chamber of Deputies contained an overwhelming number of eager Legitimists, and Chateaubriand inferred from English precedents that under a Parliamentary constitution the Executive power ought to have passed to a rash and reactionary majority. The King and his more prudent advisers determined to rely on the support of the nation against the passion of the disappointed emigrants, and thus, by a happy coincidence, the Crown became the best security for a liberal policy; while monarchical and aristocratic theorists declaimed in favour of Parliamentary rights, making at the same time ample use of the unaccustomed liberty of the press. On the dissolution of the Chamber in 1816, Chateaubriand published his *Monarchy according to the Charter*, for the purpose of proving that the Minister had violated constitutional principles by a measure in which the King himself had a considerable share. Deprived, in consequence, of the honorary title of Minister of State, he became still more zealous in his hostility to the Government—until, on the assassination of the Duke of Berry, in 1820, he countenanced a false and odious calumny against Decazes. Notwithstanding occasional violence and injustice, the great royalist writer was rendering invaluable services to his country by teaching friends and enemies how political warfare ought to be conducted in a country which intends to preserve its liberty. Freedom is got by reason, not by force; and constitutional principles are best established when both parties in every successive controversy are compelled to appeal to their sanction.

On the formation of the Duke of Richelieu's second Ministry, the rising influence of the Royalists was shown by the appointment of Chateaubriand as Minister at Berlin, and when Villèle succeeded to power in 1821, he was advanced to the splendid embassy of London. The Spanish Revolution was at the time tending to produce a coldness between England and France; for notwithstanding Lord Castlereagh's Legitimist sympathies, he was well aware that the country would regard with equal jealousy the re-establishment of despotism by force of arms, and the revival of the Bourbon family alliance. When Canning succeeded to office, common tastes and similar pretensions gave rise to an ostensible personal intimacy between the Ambassador and the Foreign Secretary; but their political antagonism became daily more marked, while Chateaubriand was privately urging on his Court a disregard, which, under the circumstances, was not unsafe, for the isolated opposition of England. The principal Minister, Villèle, was opposed to intervention and to war, while his colleague in the Foreign Department, the Viscount Montmorency, was inspired by a religious enthusiasm for the restoration of the Spanish King and Church. The Ambassador in London, by adroitly humouring the hesitation of Villèle, obtained the appointment of second Plenipotentiary at the Congress of Verona, where he was intended to serve as a check on his own official superior. On the subsequent resignation of Montmorency, Chateaubriand, nominated as his successor, immediately proceeded to carry out the policy which he had throughout intended to support. In directing the triumphant march of the French army to Cadiz he displayed much administrative vigour; and the merit of suppressing an imbecile Government, for the benefit of the basest of tyrants, belongs entirely to the Foreign Minister and to the principal officers of the staff. As a political measure, the expedition produced none of the results which had been contemplated by its promoters. The dynasty of



Louis XVIII. was not strengthened. French influence in Spain was rather diminished, and, in a few years, the heir of Ferdinand was reduced to the rank of a wandering pretender. The immediate success, however, of the enterprise furnished Chateaubriand with matter of exultation for the remainder of his life; and M. Villemain aptly compares his year's tenure of office to the forgotten Consulship of Cicero. In the pride of ability and success he offended his more prosaic colleague, and, in 1824, he was summarily dismissed from office in the most insulting and injurious manner. It was an enormous error on the part of Villèle to convert a troublesome colleague into the most implacable and dangerous of enemies. Chateaubriand instantly resumed his natural place as the polemical chief of the Opposition, and by his writings and speeches he continued to damage his rival, until under Charles X. he finally drove him from power.

Under the Martignac Ministry he accepted the embassy to Rome, but on the nomination of Polignac he firmly though unwillingly resigned. No friend of liberty censured more severely the subsequent follies and crimes of the King and of his infatuated Ministers; but Chateaubriand protested with steady fidelity against the elevation of Louis Philippe, and to the end of his life he watched with persevering hostility all the efforts of the Orleans dynasty to acquire a permanent establishment on the throne. In his later years, a complimentary phrase of Napoleon's, reported in the *Memoirs* of St. Helena, produced some reaction in his feeling to the great object of his early animosity, and to the surprise of his friends he exchanged civilities with Prince Louis Napoleon, who was residing in Switzerland during one of his visits. His last literary work, the posthumous *Memoirs from beyond the Tomb*, was disfigured by the vanity which had always been a defect in his character. He survived the disgraceful catastrophe of 1848, and died two days after the defeat of the June insurrection. His biographer observes with truth, that his literary influence has been felt by every subsequent writer; and he concludes one of the most valuable publications of recent times with an appropriate protest against the modern servility which would distinguish between art and moral conviction:—

En ce sens, un maître éloquent de la jeunesse a pu récemment dire, avec justesse et sans orgueil, que la littérature de la Restauration était la dernière littérature de la France; c'est-à-dire que, si la liberté politique suscitée à cette époque, et qui la continua, disparaît entièrement des lois et des esprits, cette littérature ne sera pas remplacée; et le monde verra ce qu'il a vu déjà, l'extinction de la pensée et de l'art sous le déploiement excessif de la matière et de la force. . . . Ce serait pour quelques hommes religieux une grande erreur de croire que l'absence du droit politique garantit mieux la foi au droit divin. Athéisme et servitude vont très-bien de compagnie; et l'Angleterre, le pays le plus libre de l'Europe, est encore aujourd'hui le plus religieux, témoin la solennité de jeûne et d'humiliation qu'il vient de célébrer.

It is fortunately not strictly true that literature perished with the Restoration, for in the graver regions of political discussion it has never been more elevated or serious than under the existing despotism. As long as Guizot and Tocqueville, Rémusat, Montalembert, and Villemain himself are allowed to instruct their countrymen, the educated classes will not be hopelessly degraded, although they are subjected to the rule of coarse military satellites, and to the political supremacy of an ignorant peasantry, incapable of valuing or preserving freedom.

#### THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS.\*

MR. JOHN EDMUND READE has been for thirty years one of those poets whose names turn up from time to time in the pages of reviews, but whose works (if we may judge by our own experience) are never met with in ordinary life. That he has, indeed, a public of his own may be inferred from the announcement that the four volumes of his collected poems are in a fourth edition; but Mr. Reade makes no secret of his conviction that he has not yet received his due. By the mouth first of one character, and then of another, he shows us how and why the poets who are sure of immortal fame may fail to obtain immediate popularity. Again and again he quotes Milton's "fit though few." He hints that critics have treated him unfairly, not by cutting him up in detail, but by lumping the finest efforts of his genius among "batches of poetry," and pronouncing on him summarily and coldly, without having taken the trouble to read him. And now, we suppose, by way of appealing to the world in a more popular style of composition, Mr. Reade has turned from poetry to novel-writing.

Why the book should be styled the *Light of Other Days*, we are utterly unable to understand; for we cannot remember any novel in which matters were (to borrow a phrase from the advertisements of Peersages and Directories) so closely "brought down to the date of publication." Not only does Mr. Reade discuss the present style of female dress, but, before the end of the second volume, we have his opinion as to the position and prospects of Lord Derby's Ministry, with allusions to Mr. Gladstone's work on Homer, to the lucrativeness of Mr. Dickens' readings, to the quarrel about the Literary Fund, and to its dinner of the present year; and in the third volume there is the affair of M. de Pène and the sub-lieutenants. If, therefore, the title has any meaning, we presume that the "other days" belong to the future, in which a considerable part of the action must be

supposed to take place; and, indeed, the future part of the story is the only one which has any "light" on it, for the past and the present are gloomy enough.

"The reason," says Mr. Reade's heroine, "why I dislike reading novels is, that the true, if introduced in them, always appears to be the unnatural portion." According to this canon, the novel before us must be most profoundly true and natural, since there can be no doubt as to its abundant improbability. Mr. Brackenbury, the hero, while living in a cottage near a south-western assize town, for the purpose of carrying on studies as to the nature of which a mysterious silence is observed, is informed one morning by his servant that on that very day a young lady of "the first family in the county" is to take her trial for the murder of a faithless lover, and that "all the world and his wife" are crowding to the Court-house. The intensity of Mr. Brackenbury's studies may no doubt account for his ignorance until the last moment of an affair which is described as having long kept the country in excitement; but as he had been on terms of the most familiar intimacy with the elder branch of the family in question, and had even known the members of the younger branch while they were visiting their Northumbrian relations, it is rather remarkable that he should not have been acquainted with the place of their residence, and should have established himself close to it without being aware of their neighbourhood. Startled by the news which he has heard, he hurries to the place of trial, where his eyes are riveted, not by the accused, but by her elder sister, Helen Hengist, who is sitting beside her. The judge sums up unfavourably, but the jury at once bring in a verdict of acquittal; whereupon the majestic Helen makes a lofty speech, in commendation of the jurymen and defiance of the judge, and "her father, a military-looking man of a commanding presence, gently led her and her sister forth from the hall." By whose hand the dead man had fallen, we never find out; for the younger Miss Hengist goes into a convent (although the family do not belong to the Roman Church), and nothing further is said on the subject.

Mr. Brackenbury has an accidental meeting with Helen, is recognised by her as an old friend, and, in consequence, calls at the Hall. On his way through the park he happens to overhear Mr. Hengist, who is a compound of worthlessness and madness, discoursing with himself aloud in justification of his behaviour towards his wife and children. The wife, it appears, is on her deathbed; and the visitor, at the daughter's request, witnesses Mrs. Hengist's last moments, with her husband's very unedifying behaviour on the occasion. The Hall now becomes intolerable to the heroine, and the more so as its neighbourhood is infested by her outcast brother, Reginald—a young gentleman who combines the attributes of gambler, debauchee, poacher, forger, ecclesiologist, and thief; and she procures an invitation from her grandmother—an eccentric, benevolent, and somewhat free-thinking old lady, who breakfasts on cream-cheese and ale, and resents every other appellation than that of "Dame," while by the rest of the world she is indifferently spoken of as "Lady Hengist," and "Lady Eleanor." Mr. Brackenbury (who had found an opportunity of proposing to Miss Hengist, and had been refused in a manner which did not absolutely shut out all hope) is also invited to Hengist Court, where, among other personages, he finds the Dame's elder son, Sir James, and his son, Charles, who is described as a poet far too good for this world, although the only specimen which is given of his talent consists of some very sorry doggerel in disparagement of Wordsworth. It is at the 201st page of the first volume that we enter "the massive iron gates opening on the wide court before the noble mansion;" and the story is then all but suspended for more than two volumes, while we are presented with a succession of conversations and sketches which really have nothing to do with it. There is talk at Hengist Court, but no action—there are odd callers who drop in—and there are calls on odd people, at whose houses other odd people are met. The scene shifts to London, where a grand party is given by Lady Jane Hengist, who finds it convenient to live apart from her husband, Sir James; and, in the course of the evening, a baronet and member of Parliament favours Mr. Brackenbury with his observations on some of the more celebrated guests—Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton and Mr. Disraeli, Lord Macaulay and Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Dickens, and Mr. Thackeray—observations which for novelty, originality, and refinement are pretty much on a level with the London correspondence of a country newspaper. Then, after a call on a Lady Blarney, we have the life and opinions of a second lofty but unsuccessful poet, who lives in a small villa on Hampstead Heath. At length, however, at page 238 of the third volume, Mr. Reade wakens up to the fact that he is within a hundred pages of the utmost limit that can be allowed for his story, and that he must really begin to do something; whereupon the old Dame is first disposed of. Impressed by her sudden death, Sir James Hengist, who had been as worthless as most of his relations, all at once announces that he is to be a new man; and this reform is not at all too early, since he is forthwith murdered by his steward, Reginald Hengist, who is at first suspected of a share in the murder, is easily proved to be innocent. The hero and the heroine become man and wife, and have quite an embarrassment of riches and houses; for the poet Charles (who had set off for Italy on finding that his cousin preferred Mr. Brackenbury to himself,) and the young lady's unlovable father, yield up to them the three mansions which belong to the two branches of

\* *The Light of Other Days*. By John Edmund Reade, Author of "Italy," &c. &c. 3 vols. London: Hurst and Blackett. 1858.

the family—the father only stipulating for a lodging in “the obscurest corner of each,” and the cousin, that the happy couple shall visit him “at the top of Fiesole,” where he is now elaborating a work which the very reviewers will be compelled to hail with reverential acclamation. About the same time several other marriages take place. Even Reginald, who had seemed to be irretrievably sunk in the lowest depths of vice and infamy, proves that (according to the other Mr. Reade’s motto) “It is never too late to mend;” for he gives out that he *will* mend, and thereupon is rewarded with the hand of an old love, Miss Vernon, who is sometimes called Lucy, and sometimes Agnes. The most ardent Universalist among novel-readers could desire nothing further in the way of happiness all round.

To the ordinary rules which bind novelists to observe something like connexion in their plots, Mr. Reade is nobly superior. Expectation is raised by startling incidents, and nothing comes of them. The scene of the younger Miss Hengist’s trial for murder has (in so far as we can see) no bearing whatever on the sequel, which is not affected by it, and might have been the same without it. While Mrs. Maude, the ancient companion of Lady Hengist, is dying, the Dame adjures her, in the most solemn manner, if there be any other existence, to give some intimation of it after death; but neither is the appeal answered, nor is any remark made on the absence of an answer. The old lady herself has a vision of her son’s murder, and tells him of it; but nothing is made of the warning, except that on the evening of his death Sir James is low-spirited and inattentive to his chess. Throughout more than two-thirds of the whole book, the story stagnates or is forgotten. Characters are introduced, and elaborately described; and then, after they have perhaps talked a little to display their peculiar humours, they vanish from our sight. Thus, in the first chapter we have a full account of the hero’s servant, Shot, who looks ominously like a reminiscence of Corporals Trim and Foss, and of the corporal (whose name we forget) in *Eugene Aram*. But, to our great relief, he only appears again twice, with nothing to say on either occasion—first as a supernumerary waiter at a dinner conducted on the principle of some theory as to the astronomy of the Egyptians; and lastly, as married to a lady’s maid who had enacted the planet Venus at the said banquet, and had been charmed by the supernumerary’s performance as a comet. There is the respectable Miss Tenny-stone, who gives the astronomical dinner out of reverence for some Egyptological crotchets of her late father, and is distinguished by the eternal phrase, “I wish to say.” There is the heroine’s dearest friend, Clara Woodman, whose acquaintance we are made to long for, but who, when we are introduced to her at Lady Jane’s party, says nothing considerable, and then is no more heard of. There is the Reverend Lord Wasteway, with his silly young bride and his idiotical note of “Sch-eh.” There is a gross bishop, who plays with the affections of one young lady, and marries another for the sake of her money. There is a Dean with a nose long enough for the *Tob-accoles Aisle*, and with a long family of “Pleiad” daughters; and there are two insignificant curates—for Mr. Reade is no admirer of the clergy. There is Eli Seymour, a “new-light fanatic” (whether clerical or lay we are not quite sure), from whom we are led to expect some mischief; but he drops out of the tale without doing either harm or good. There is the Right Hon. Tom Baggs, who, notwithstanding his style of a Privy-councillor, is described as “a human inanity who had grown up to the extension of six feet,” whose only ambition is “to be considered a great sportsman,” whose “character is that of a human seaweed, gelid and gelatinous, swayed to and fro with the current of opinion;” and there is a host of other ill-contrived puppets, which the author, after having put them together and dressed them up, has no idea what to do with. Yet while we are saturated with details as to such irrelevant persons, there is not the slightest hint as to the previous history of Mr. Brackenbury himself—where he dropped from, what were his condition and occupation, how he had come to be so deeply venerated by Clan Hengist in all its branches, or what means he would have had of maintaining a wife if Sir Charles and the lady’s papa had been less generous and accommodating.

Mr. Reade, although he blames Mr. Dickens for raising a laugh in “the galleries” by bestowing “humorous or grotesque names” on his characters, is not only himself very fond of this cheap comicality, but continually calls our attention to the strangeness of the names which he uses. Thus, of *Shot* it is said that his “name and story were alike noticeable.” The mention of Mr. *Maudlin* draws from the hero an exclamation—“What an extraordinary name!” When Lord *Wasteway* is announced, there is a fresh cry of “What a very remarkable name!” Again, on hearing of Dr. *Pluggem*, Mr. Brackenbury’s ever-ready wonder bursts forth—“What a very odd name! the English certainly rejoice in the funniest names;” and a few pages later we once more find him calling on the “Gracious Powers” in amazement at the name of *Cockey*. All this is surely not very artistic. To ourselves we confess that the surname of the heroine’s family is quite the most surprising in the book.

Mr. Reade has a conviction that he is right, and that the rest of mankind are wrong, which he holds with a tenacity worthy of Mr. Drummond, or of Mr. Jefferson Hogg himself. Yet, in respect of politics, we cannot discover any lights which might not be derived from the *Times* and *Punch*—except, indeed, that the baronet who acts as showman of Lady Jane’s lions quotes from Mr. Reade’s own

poems a page in which the Crimean war is described as a great moral triumph of Russia, and Sebastopol as the Russian Thermopylae. There are repeated expressions of thorough adherence to Lord Palmerston, “the veteran lion who had upheld our character for half a century.” There is implicit confidence in Lord Macaulay, as a writer no less impartial than brilliant. There is the novel opinion that Mr. Disraeli is a very clever fellow, but not a very trustworthy statesman. There is a sublime contempt for our military system, with plentiful sneers at superannuated generals, fierce tirades against the purchase of commissions, and a glorification of “middle-class men” as the only winners of battles. There is an earnest exhortation to look at the military power of France, and to be prepared against invasion from that quarter. The East India Directors come in for violent abuse, and we are told that—

As the emblem of the warning *Times* should be Sisyphus, for ever up-heaving into the public sight the weight of truths recoiling still on himself, but ever re-presented, so the emblem reared over the doors of office should be a gigantic crab, with the law of its life mottoed beneath—*Retrograde*.

We could say much more as to Mr. Reade’s oracular utterances on literature and art, on religion and the game-laws—as to his language, which is adorned by such pregnant and elegant expressions as “contacting,” “visting,” “laid” for *lay*, “incisive” (a very favourite word), “deracinating,” “petrified life and selfism”—as to his power of writing dialogue, and as to the fragments of his poetry which are continually introduced—sometimes with eulogistic remarks by the characters of the story. But we have perhaps already said too much for our readers, and Mr. Reade’s opinion of reviewers is so firmly fixed that we cannot hope to influence him. He knows all about us and our doings, and has let the public into some knowledge on the subject. For did not he—or, at least, Mr. Brackenbury—once gain admission “as an umbra, a man without a position or a name, into one of the minor clubs” where critics congregate? Did he not find them all employed on cigars and brandy-and-water, while on the table lay “a thick Biographical Dictionary, in which each had his name and acts chronicled at length, according to his interest with the publisher?” And were they not a wretched set—jealous of one another, and malignant towards all true poets and men of genius, from the author of *Italy* (not Rogers, but Mr. Reade), of *Catiline* (not Ben Jonson nor Dr. Croly, but Mr. Reade), and of *Man in Paradise* (not Milton, but Mr. Reade), downwards? Yet Mr. Reade himself will allow, that whatever may have been the case with his former critics, we have really read the book which we profess to review; and we will add that any one who shall do as much must be possessed of more than an average power of endurance.

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